





ISAAC FOOT

# THE BELOVED PRINCESS

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES, THE LONELY  
DAUGHTER OF A LONELY QUEEN

# THE AMAZING DUCHESS

The Romantic History of Elizabeth Chudleigh,  
Maid of Honour—Duchess of Kingston—  
Countess of Bristol

By CHARLES E. PEARCE

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Her Royal Highness The Princess Charlotte

Charlotte

THE  
BELOVED PRINCESS

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES, THE LONELY  
DAUGHTER OF A LONELY QUEEN

BY

CHARLES E. PEARCE

AUTHOR OF  
"THE AMAZING DUCHESS," ETC.

*WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE AND THIRTY-TWO  
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS PRINTED ON ART PAPER.*

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To

MY FRIEND

ROBERT LEE CAMPBELL

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## PREFACE

THE short life of the Princess Charlotte comprises within its two-and-twenty years, less two months, one of the most eventful periods in English history. Abroad the restless ambition of Bonaparte was convulsing the whole of Europe. At home, apart from the anxiety concerning our arms in Spain and Portugal, and the fear of the invasion of these shores, the mind of the nation was continually disturbed by the domestic troubles of the Royal Family. The monetary difficulties of the heir to the Crown and those of his brothers, their squabbles, their scandals, were public property, and the darker side of Royalty was exhibited in a fashion which it would be difficult to parallel. The malady of the King and the domestic tastes of the Queen kept the monarch and his consort in the background, and "that fierce light which beats on thrones" was directed mainly upon the Prince of Wales, the Princess Caroline, and, in later years, upon the Princess Charlotte and the turmoil of intrigue in which she was involved.

A vast amount of interesting matter concerning the young Princess has been published since the *Memoir of Princess Charlotte Augusta* of Robert Huish appeared in 1818, but it would be rash to say that the last word has been uttered on the subject. Meanwhile the ample material available exists in a somewhat scattered form. The bulk is to be found in the letters and diaries of the period; in the various "Reminiscences" which have appeared during the last half-century; in the biographical contributions of Miss Cornelia Knight, Lady Rose Weigall, and Mrs. Rachel Jones; in the researches of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, Mr. W. H. Wilkins, Mr. Lewis Melville, and Mr. Childe Pemberton; and in the curious specu-

lations of Professor Clerici in relation to what he calls the "secret" of Princess Charlotte's birth.

I have sought in *The Beloved Princess* to bring together these scattered threads and weave them into a connected form. In so doing it was impossible to avoid going over ground already trodden, in view of presenting a complete narrative so far as it was practicable. It may, however, be safely asserted that the inner history of certain matters will never be written, nor is it desirable that it should be written. The one thing that stands out clear in the midst of scandal and intrigue is the personality of the Princess Charlotte. Charmingly natural, warm-hearted, lovable, and courageous, her impulses were for good, and her hatred of meanness and duplicity and her force of character sustained her through a conflict of emotions, accentuated by a sense of her exalted rank and of her responsibilities as next in succession to the throne, such as few have had to endure. The life of the Princess, passed as it was amid stormy surroundings, its pathos, its tragic ending, and the love she inspired in the hearts of the people who had hoped that one day she would be their Queen, give her story an undying interest and, I venture to think, justify an attempt to present it afresh.

My acknowledgments and thanks are due to Mr. A. M. Broadley, who has placed his collection of prints illustrative of the life and times of Princess Charlotte at my disposal. The list includes the portraits of Frances, Countess of Jersey (p. 69), Princess Charlotte (p. 233), Princess Caroline (p. 33), George, Prince of Wales (p. 51), Prince Leopold (p. 313), the Prince Regent (pp. 213, 223), the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold at the theatre (p. 397), the Devonshire Minuet (p. 293), Princess Charlotte's handwriting (p. 87), the medallion on the cover, and the eight contemporary cartoons (pp. 97, 107, 283, 303, 323, 333, 343, 361).

CHARLES E. PEARCE.

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# THE BELOVED PRINCESS

## CHAPTER I

1794

Charlotte's ancestry—The vices of the Georges—The misfortunes of the Brunswick-Wolfenbüttels—The Prince of Wales's mercenary marriage—Lady Jersey's baleful influence—The Princess Caroline's past—A whispered scandal—Suspensions of insanity—The Hon. Miss Wynn's curious story.

TO Charlotte Augusta, Princess of Wales, may be fittingly applied the lines :

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Nature had formed her to love and to be loved. She was beautiful in face and figure ; her disposition was generous, her impulses warm ; she was unselfish ; she was resolute and not afraid to obey the instincts of her heart ; and all through the storms and tempests of her girlhood—a girlhood which her parents made their battle-ground—she showed a self-control and high-mindedness which augured well for the future when, as everybody hoped and believed, she would become the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

But it was not to be. Once indeed the malevolent fates which pursued her from her birth relented, and for a brief space she was permitted to taste the cup of

happiness ; then at the supreme moment of woman's life—the moment of motherhood—the web was drawn and all was over.

Charlotte, "this princely child of disunited parents," inherited sorrow and ill-doing. On her father's side moral and mental defects had accumulated for generations. For evidence we need not go back further than to the Elector of Hanover. The dark tragedy of Queen Sophia Dorothea, his wife, her long and terrible imprisonment, the murder of her alleged lover, Count Konigsmark, can never be disassociated from the memory of the first Hanoverian monarch who reigned over England. His son, the second George, could claim bravery on the battle-field, but he had few other good qualities which deserve recognition. He was indifferent to his marriage vows, and he cared little for the country he was called upon to govern, save for the wealth it brought him. He had no mercy for his opponents, as the brutal executions of the rebel lords fully showed. His lifelong quarrels with his father were repeated in his lifelong quarrels with his eldest son. England during his reign was more debased, more lawless, and more heavily taxed than at almost any other period of her history. He was quite content to leave the government in the hands of his wife, Caroline of Anspach, and her favourite minister Walpole.

Any natural tendency to good his son Frederick had in him was utterly destroyed by his education—if education it could be called—at a corrupt German Court. Frederick, the butt of his circle when at man's estate, never had a strong intellect ; his wife, the Princess Augusta, suffered from a chronic ailment, and their eldest son George inherited the weak mental faculties of the one and the bodily defects of the other. Of George IV. it is only necessary to say that what brains he had were soddened by dissipation.

The history of the line of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel,

to which Queen Caroline, the wife of the fourth George, belonged is of a different kind. It was shadowed by misfortune. In the year in which Charles William Frederick, Duke of Brunswick, the father of Caroline, was born, the family of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was nearly rendered extinct by "as horrible a plot as ever was conceived by man." Two dukes of that family died within six months of each other, and the swiftness of the interval between their deaths gave rise to suspicions of foul play. Inquiry led to the discovery of a plot which was to destroy by poison the whole of the reigning house of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. Charles William Frederick, then an infant, was hastily removed to a place of safety; and so well was the secret kept that for many years it was not known where he was concealed.

Eventually the conspiracy was crushed. The young duke emerged from his hiding-place, and went through the Seven Year War, under the banner of the King of Prussia. It was during one of George II.'s journeys to Hanover that a marriage was arranged between Charles and the Princess Augusta, the King's granddaughter. The third daughter of the marriage was Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, born May 17, 1768, destined to be the crownless Queen of England, the loneliest of mothers, the most unhappy of wives.

Not on Caroline alone did the unlucky star of her family rest. Her youngest brother was drowned; her eldest sister Charlotte, the wife of the Duke of Würtemberg, after being savagely ill-used by her husband, died under mysterious circumstances, the true history of which has never been divulged; and her father fell on the field of Jena, treacherously shot, so it was whispered, out of revenge. Truly had the fates conspired against the child of George, Prince Regent of England, and Caroline of Brunswick!

The marriage of Charlotte's father and mother was a cold, mercenary, business bargain, in which there

was not a single redeeming feature. The Prince's debts amounted to over £600,000; he had contracted a morganatic marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert; and his reckless extravagance and shameless conduct were making his name a byword and a reproach. His creditors were clamorous, the nation was grinding under the weight of taxation, and the horror of the Reign of Terror in France had not passed away. King George and Queen Charlotte decided that marriage was the only thing to stop the Prince's headlong race to ruin, and to give him some semblance of respectability in the eyes of the people. But these really were minor issues; the main point was that a marriage was an excellent reason for approaching Parliament, not only to increase the Prince's allowance, but to arrange for the removal of his mountain of debt.

The most formidable obstacles to the attainment of this object were the inclinations of the Prince himself. He did not want to give up Mrs. Fitzherbert, and he had not the slightest desire to have a wife selected by his royal parents. But the situation was critical, and however unpalatable might be the dose of matrimony, the Prince would have to swallow it.

How His Royal Highness was induced to screw his courage to the necessary pitch is a matter upon which it is impossible to speak precisely; but the method may be conjectured. Judging by the light of subsequent events, it is not straining the matter to suggest that the intriguing and unscrupulous Lady Jersey had much to do towards helping the Prince to make up his mind. Lady Jersey was at this moment closely associated with the Prince, who, if not entirely under her influence, was more likely to be swayed by her than by his father. The Prince had quarrelled with his mother, and this fact added considerably to the imbroglio, for there is little doubt that throughout the miserable plot the Queen was in league with the crafty and malicious *intrigante*.

It was Lady Jersey's interest to bring about a severance between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert, so as to attach him more to herself. A legitimate marriage by His Royal Highness was not of the slightest consequence to Lady Jersey; indeed, knowing the Prince's temperament and tastes, the matrimonial yoke would be more likely to further her interests. It may well be surmised, therefore, that the cunning woman dropped insidious counsels, and that the Prince through her agency was brought to see the reasonableness of consent.

This consent he gave with the worst grace possible. The choice lay between two of his German cousins—one on his father's side, the Princess Caroline of Brunswick, and Louise, Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, a niece of Queen Charlotte. "One d——d German *frow* is as good as another" he at first exclaimed; but when he found who the candidates were, he was able to make a distinction. The Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz he would not have at any price. "One of that family is enough" was his unfilial comment—a remark that could not fail to embitter the strained relations already existing between him and his mother, and prejudice the latter against Caroline should his choice fall upon the Princess of Brunswick.

As Louise was much more handsome than Caroline one may well wonder whether this fact had anything to do with Lady Jersey's plans. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the lady would fight against the introduction of a possible rival in the shape of a beautiful wife. If the Prince really fell in love with Louise! More unlikely things than this might happen, and there is ground, consequently, for believing that while Lady Jersey was working on behalf of the Princess of Brunswick on the one hand, on the other she was intriguing against her. Caroline was thus very unfortunate from the beginning, for, apart from the

plotting of Lady Jersey, she had already excited not only the prejudice but the hatred of the Queen—a hatred which had a great deal to do with the life of misery that the poor Princess, in common with her daughter, subsequently had to endure.

Unluckily Caroline was open to attack, and to appreciate Lady Jersey's dark and tortuous scheming it is necessary to know something of the Princess's early history. Her biographer, Robert Huish, hints in veiled terms to a chapter in her life which seems to indicate the existence of a scandal; and whether or not there was any foundation for his mysterious allusions, it is certain that for some time during her girlhood Caroline was the subject of considerable gossip. The Court of Brunswick was, like most German Courts of that date, not particularly strict in regard to its morals. An example was set by the Duke himself, whose mistress, the Countess of Hertzfeldt, was openly recognised. His wife, the Duchess, coarse in mind as in manners, at times railed at the arrangement, but tolerated it, and found consolation in the indulgence of her propensities for scandal and in her insatiable curiosity.

A sidelight on the Duke's amorous propensities is thrown by an awkward adventure he had when in England. It is said that he made hot love to a married lady in Shrewsbury, and kept an appointment with her at a certain inn in that town. On his arrival, however, his imperfect English aroused suspicion that he was an escaped prisoner of war, a number of French soldiers at that time being incarcerated in this country. Information was conveyed to Mr. Forrester, the son-in-law of the Duke of Rutland, and His Royal Highness, to his disgust, was arrested. He dared not confess his rank, and pretended he was an officer in the Duke of Brunswick's German Legion. Unluckily he was not believed, and in desperation he disclosed his identity. But his captors were incredulous. Mr. Forrester

laughed the explanation to scorn. "I am certain," he remarked, "that the Duke of Brunswick is not such a frippery fellow as you are." A few hours later, however, the truth of the Duke's assertion was established, and he was released with many apologies.

The Princess, in after-years, when inveighing against England and the English Court, was asked by her lady-in-waiting, Lady Charlotte Campbell, if she left Brunswick with regret. "Not at all," Lady Charlotte records in her "Diary of a Lady-in-Waiting," "I was sick, tired of it; but I was sorry to leave my fader. I loved my fader dearly, better nor any oder person"; and the tears poured over her face. "I will tell you," she went on to say, and she mastered her emotion—"I will tell you, there is none affection more powerful than dat we feel for a good fader; but dere were some unlucky tings in our Court, which made my position difficult. My fader was most entirely attached to a lady for thirty years, who in fact was his mistress; she was the beautifullest creature, and the cleverest; but, though my fader continued to pay my moder all possible respect, my poor moder could not suffer this attachment; and de consequence was, I did not know what to do between them; when I was civil to the one, I was scolded by the other, and was very tired of being shuttlecock between them."

It was hardly possible for an impressionable girl not to be influenced adversely by such surroundings. Apart from this, her life was made miserable by the tyranny of her mother, and those put in charge over her. The Duchess of Würtemberg, her sister-in-law, wrote in later years: "She is to be pitied for her bad education; indeed, her relations are unpardonable for allowing those about her to treat her with such cruel severity. Will you believe it?—at thirteen years old she had a governess who would not allow her to go to the window; she was seldom or never permitted to dine at table, or even come downstairs when there

was any company ; if she did, her eyes were always full of tears, and her mother, instead of speaking kindly to her or leaving her alone, always bid her go on crying, for it was only her naughtiness that made her so passionate. Was that the way either to soften her manner or do her heart good ? Poor thing ! the moment she obtained her liberty, having not the strength of principles to govern her passions, she allowed all her little evil impulses to get the better."

Bearing all this in mind, is it wonderful that Caroline's manners, as we are told by Huish, should sometimes border on freedom, and that "the rigid Englishmen would call them indecorous" ? On the other hand, according to the same authority she had a masculine strength of mind and nothing appeared to daunt her. She was proud of her countrymen and, like all the members of her family, was a born fighter. When she was a girl her tutor put to her the question : "In what country is the lion found ?" She immediately answered : "In the heart of a Brunswicker." When advised not to mount one of the horses in the favourite game of the Carousal, as the circular motion might make her giddy, she exclaimed : "A Brunswicker dare do anything. Fear is a word of which a Brunswicker is ignorant."

Not the least singular trait in her character was her inordinate fondness for children, a peculiarity which throughout her life led her many times into embarrassing positions. When quite a girl she never saw a rustic chubby boy in her rides or walks but she immediately stopped and questioned it about its parents, its abode, and its station in life. In later years this predilection laid her open to the attacks of her enemies, who made the most unscrupulous use of her weakness.

The scandal to which Huish alludes had something to do with an attachment the Princess had formed with one below her in rank. The letters which passed between her and her admirer were discovered by one



of the court spies, and, when the Princess thought all her plans were ripe, she was suddenly despatched to a distant part of the duchy, and the affair was at an end. Huish, in his sententious style, says : " Delicacy forbids us to expatiate any further upon this particular circumstance in the life of the Princess Caroline, and indeed we should have been disposed to have passed it over *in toto* had we not thereby exposed ourselves to the imputation of gross ignorance of circumstances which were at one time the prevailing topic of the *conversazione* of the Court of Brunswick."

Lady Charlotte Campbell gives an interesting reminiscence of Caroline's past which may be quoted. " The Princess," she writes in her " Diary," the publication of which made Thackeray so angry, " told one of her friends one day, who repeated it to me, that her life had been an eventful one from her earliest years ; that at one period she was to have been married to the uncle of the Queen of Prussia, at another to the Prince of Orange, at another to this [*sic*] Queen's brother. The latter, she said, was a most agreeable man, not at all ugly, and very pleasant in his manners—that she had liked him very much as a friend, but nothing more. Prince George of Darmstadt (I think that was the name she gave the Queen of Prussia's uncle) was a very handsome man, tall, slight, yet not too thin. " He turned all de women's heads except mine. I like him very much, but he was very perfide to me—a false, perfidious friend. It was he who was the lover of the late Queen of France, and he was the real father of the last Dauphin. Just before I came to this country I was very unhappy. My fader said to me, if I would marry on the Continent, he never wished to get rid of me, or to send me away ; but if I was determined to marry, that this situation which presented itself seemed sent by Providence to my advantage, and he would not suffer me to slight it. So, as a drowning wretch catches at a straw, I caught at

this crown and sceptre. But, if I had not been miraculously supported, I could not have outlived all I have done: there are moments when one is supernaturally helped."

It will be noticed, when we come to Lord Malmesbury's mission to the Court of Brunswick to ask for Caroline's hand in marriage on behalf of the Prince, that the Earl was presumably ignorant of this gossip. Nor could he have known of the talk that the Princess's brain was believed to be slightly affected. A curious story in relation to this belief is given in the "Diaries of a Lady of Quality" (the Hon. Miss F. W. Wynn).

"The general opinion in Brunswick," Miss Wynn writes, "was that in early youth the Princess had shown some symptoms of insanity, and as a proof it is said that a great ball was once given to which the Duchess would not allow her daughter, then aged sixteen, to go. The ball was just begun when a messenger came to the Duke and Duchess to inform them that Princess Caroline was taken violently ill. Of course they returned immediately to the Palace, all the Court following them. When they reached the ante-chamber of the apartments of the Princess, they found she was on a bed in the next room, screaming in agony. They were told she was black in the face. The doors were all open when the Duke and Duchess went up to the bed and tenderly inquired what was the matter. The doctors were not yet arrived; the Princess said any attempt at dissimulation would be useless and impossible. 'I am in labour, Madam, and entreat you to send for an accoucheur immediately.' These words were spoken loud enough to be heard by all those who were waiting in the next room. Soon after an accoucheur came, and as soon as the Princess saw him she jumped out of bed, wiped the livid colour from her face, and with a loud laugh said to the Duchess, 'Now, Madam, will you keep me another time from a ball?' At this period, whenever she did go into public,

there were persons appointed to watch that she did not give notes, etc., etc., but it was supposed that she found means to elude their vigilance."

Miss Wynn adds: "The idea of the unsoundness of the mind of the unfortunate Caroline is strongly confirmed by the following circumstances related to me by Lord Redesdale. Having been invited to dine with the Duchess of Brunswick at Blackheath, he and Lady Redesdale, coming before the appointed time, passed half an hour with the Duchess. Having known him from his earliest youth, the Duchess began talking very confidentially and imprudently of the misconduct of her daughter, and ended with saying, 'But her excuse is, poor thing, she's not right here.' She struck her forehead, and burst into a violent flood of tears. By this time some guests were heard entering, and Lord and Lady Redesdale were obliged to support the unhappy old woman to her room, and make the best story they could. The story goes also that when the Princess was at Baden, and the Grand-duke made a *party de chasse* for her, she appeared on horseback with a heavy pumpkin on her head. Upon the Grand-duke expressing astonishment, she only replied that the weather was hot, and nothing kept the head so cool and comfortable as a pumpkin."

"Good Queen Charlotte" hated her sister-in-law, the Duchess of Brunswick, with all the venom of her narrow mind; and though the two did not correspond it is hardly likely that the gossip and tittle-tattle of the Court of Brunswick did not find its way to her Majesty's ears. However, she does not appear to have made use of it to prejudice King George against his niece. Possibly she knew his obstinacy sufficiently well to be certain it would be useless to try and change his mind. Besides, insanity was a dangerous subject to mention to the King. His terrible attack of madness in 1788 must have been fresh in the Queen's mind. She could not have forgotten the pitiable and painful event

on the Christmas Day of that year. Mrs. Papendieck tells how the festival was kept a secret from the King, but he found out it was the 25th, and asked why he had not been told that the Archbishop had arrived to administer the sacrament to him. No particular answer was given, when, upon his becoming impatient, he was reminded that all those things rested with the doctors. The fever ran high, yet the King appeared calm, and tasted his dinner, but could not eat. Suddenly he got under the sofa, saying that, as on that day everything had been denied him, he would there converse with his Saviour, and no one could interrupt him! He was allowed to remain until he was calm, and Mr. Papendieck then carried him to bed.

Bearing in mind Huish's words, it is more than likely that the rumours concerning Caroline were not only known to Queen Charlotte, but that, as subsequent events showed, she discussed them with Lady Jersey. There was no secret about the character of Lady Jersey. Miss Mary Frampton, in her diary, sums her up in a few touches. She calls her "a clever, unprincipled, but beautiful and fascinating woman, though with scarcely any real good quality. She had lived a good deal in the Harcourt society, being very clever, and there my aunt Elizabeth Fauquier met her, and knew her well. Amongst other freaks she was a very fine lady, but in general respected my aunt. One day my Lady Jersey went up to her at an assembly in a very insolent manner, saying, 'Mrs. Fauquier, you are just the person to have a pincushion about you; I want a pin'—upon which my aunt, opening her large eyes at her, replied, 'Yes, I always have a pincushion, and plenty of pins, but I am just the person *not* to give you one of them.' Lady Jersey walked away, but did not quarrel with my aunt." Her ladyship was evidently discriminating as well as presumptuous.

That she was fascinating Creevey testifies. Writing of her five and twenty years later, when she was well past middle age, he says :

“ ‘ Shall I tell you what Lady Jersey is like ? She is like one of her numerous gold and silver dicky-birds that are in all the showrooms of this house (Lord Jersey’s mansion, Middleton). She begins to sing at eleven o’clock, and, with the interval of an hour she retires to her cage to rest, she sings till twelve at night, without a moment’s interruption. She changes her feathers for dinner, and her plumage, both morning and evening, is the happiest and most beautiful I ever saw.’ ”

It may be safely assumed that the Prince was quite ignorant of the past history of his bride. At one time, indeed, he seemed disposed to make the best of a bad job. He had seen Caroline’s miniature, and was not displeased with it, and the reports of the Dukes of York and Clarence confirmed his good impression. “ Lennox and Fitzroy have seen her,” he said, “ and they tell me she is even handsomer than her miniature.” But in what his brothers said there was double dealing, Lord Malmesbury hinting that the Duke of Clarence spoke well of Caroline, and urged the Prince to marry her, in order to annoy the Duke of York. Poor Caroline ! Her early experience of being a shuttlecock was destined to be continued.

Everything went badly for her. At the time of the departure of the Earl of Malmesbury for Brunswick doubt and distrust crept into the Prince’s mind. He had carried out his compact to abandon Mrs. Fitzherbert, and, deprived of her society, he was more than ever in the company of Lady Jersey. Lord Holland was of opinion that “ she (Lady Jersey) may have decided his preference for a woman of indelicate manners, indifferent character, and not very inviting appearance, from the hope that disgust for the wife would secure constancy for the mistress.” This hope

no doubt was in Lady Jersey's breast during the first stage of her tactics, but it is no less certain that when the marriage was settled, and it was too late for the Prince to draw back, she proceeded craftily to create a disgust for his bride by insinuations as to her past. It will be seen during the progress of Lord Malmesbury's mission that Lady Jersey's hand was at work, and that she left nothing undone that could wreck the future of bride and bridegroom.

## CHAPTER II

1794

Lord Malmesbury's opinion of Caroline—Her impulsiveness and want of tact—Plotting at the English Court—A crafty anonymous letter—The foolishness of the Duchess of Brunswick—The marriage by proxy—Caroline journeys to England—Lady Jersey's insolence—Amazing reception of the Princess by the Prince of Wales—The marriage—The Prince's intoxication—Professor Clerici's curious speculations—Was there a secret ?

LORD MALMESBURY'S diary furnishes much interesting reading on the subject of his mission to the Court of Brunswick. He writes on November 8, 1794: "The Princess Caroline much embarrassed on my first being presented to her—pretty face—good hand—tolerable teeth but going—fair hair and light eyebrows—good bust—short with what the French call *des épaules impertinences*. Vastly happy with her future expectations." The last words suggest that, at the outset of the matrimonial negotiations, Caroline had no misgivings.

Lady Charlotte Campbell's description of the Princess, written some years later, does not differ greatly from that of Lord Malmesbury. Coming from a feminine pen it is of course more minute. The inevitable changes wrought by time are not unskilfully delineated. Lady Charlotte says :

"Although during the last years of her life she was bloated and disfigured by sorrow and by the life she led, the Princess was in her early youth a pretty woman ; fine light hair—very delicately-formed features, and a fine complexion—quick, glancing, penetrating eyes,

long cut and rather sunk in the head, which gave them much expression—and a remarkably delicately-formed mouth. But her head was always too large for her body, and her neck too short ; and, latterly, her whole figure was like a ball, and her countenance became hardened, and an expression of defiance and boldness took possession of it that was very unpleasant. Nevertheless, when she chose to assume it, she had a very noble air, and I have seen her on more than one occasion put on a dignified carriage, which became her much more than the affectation of girlishness which she generally preferred.”

In spite of Caroline's prettiness, however, it was not long before the Earl must have seen how unsuitable a wife she was likely to prove for his royal master. But Malmesbury had no choice but to go on, for, suitable or not, his orders were to arrange the marriage. Within a week of his arrival at the German Court, we have this entry : “ He (the Duke of Brunswick) said of his daughter, ‘ *Elle n'est pas bête, mais elle n'a pas de jugement—elle a été élevée sévère—et il le fallait.*’ The Duke requested me to recommend to her discretion not to ask questions, and above all not to be free in giving opinions of persons and things aloud, and he hinted delicately, but very pointedly, at the free and unreserved manners of the Duchess, who at times is extremely apt to forget her audience. He desired me to advise her never to show any jealousy of the Prince, and that if he had any *goûts* not to notice them.” Subsequent events showed that the Duke estimated the character of his daughter fairly correctly.

Mlle. Hertzfeldt's analysis was still more searching, and she impressed upon the Earl the “necessity of being strict with the Princess Caroline.” The lady added that “she was not clever or ill-disposed, but of a temper easily wrought on, and had no tact.” Mlle. Hertzfeldt told Lord Malmesbury that his advice “would do more good than the Duke's, as although she





CAROLINE, PRINCESS OF WALES,  
From an engraving after Höyer.



respected him, she also feared him, and considered him as a severe rather than an affectionate father—that she had no respect for her mother, and was inattentive to her when she dared.”

Scarcely a week had gone over when Caroline's prospects of future happiness were dashed. Rumours concerning Lady Jersey reached her, and she lost no time in questioning the Earl. She was uneasy, but it is clear she had little suspicion of the truth. The idea that Queen Charlotte, her own aunt and the mother of her future husband, was conspiring against her, could not possibly have entered her mind. She supposed Lady Jersey to be merely an *intrigante*, such as was to be found in every court in Germany, but Lord Malmesbury's grave reply must have disillusioned her. “In regard to Lady ——,” said the Earl, “she and all the other ladies would frame their conduct towards her (the Princess) by hers towards them; that I humbly advised that this should not be too familiar or too easy, but that it might be affable without forgetting that she was Princess of Wales. . . . She said she wished to be popular, and was afraid I recommended too much reserve; that probably I thought her too prone *à se livrer*. I made a bow. She said ‘Tell me freely.’ I said I did; that it was an amiable quality, but one which could not in her high situation be given way to without great risk; that as to popularity it never was attained by familiarity, that it could only belong to respect, and was to be acquired by a just mixture of dignity and affability. I quoted the Queen as a model in this respect. The Princess said she was afraid of the Queen; she was sure she would be jealous of her and do her harm. I replied that for this reason it was of the last consequence to be attentive towards her; to be always on her guard; and never to fail in any exterior mark of respect towards her, or to let drop an inconsiderate word before her.”

Malmesbury gauged the position accurately; he was not blind to the defects of Queen Charlotte, and his words, though guarded, could not fail to convey a note of warning to even a dull-witted woman. Caroline was anything but dull-witted, indeed, dullness was a quality she particularly abhorred, and but for her courage she might well have been daunted by what she must have felt she had to face. She was going to the arms of a husband whom she had never seen, whose questionable reputation was a matter of public gossip, and whose sole motive for marrying her was that he might be relieved from his burden of debt! The poor Princess spoke her mind on the subject in a letter to a friend. "I am about to be married to my cousin the Prince of Wales," she wrote. "I esteem him for the generosity, and his letters bespeak a cultivated mind. My uncle is a good man, and I love him much, but I feel I shall never be happy. Estranged from my connections, friends, and all I hold dear, I am about to make a permanent connection. I fear for the consequences."

Malmesbury's excellent advice could hardly have been offered to a woman less able to frame her conduct according to rule. The Earl must have felt he was wasting his words, but he could do no more than carry out his mission conscientiously, so that when it came to discussing the most important character in the drama on which the curtain was about to rise—in other words, the Prince of Wales—we have the diplomatist gravely laying down exemplary rules for the guidance of the young wife. "The surest way of recovering a tottering affection," he told her, "was softness, enduring, and caresses; that I knew enough of the Prince to be quite sure he could not withstand such a conduct, while a contrary one would probably make him disagreeable and peevish and certainly force him to be false and dissembling." It is not to be supposed that Caroline was not conscious of the wisdom

of Malmesbury's fatherly advice, and, remembering her warm-heartedness, there is every reason to believe she would have tried its effect had the chance been given her. But it never was, and that is where the pity and the mystery—for it is morally certain there *was* a mystery—of this most unfortunate marriage came in.

Meanwhile crafty plotting was going on in England. An anonymous letter coming from this country, in which reference was made to a certain lady at the English Court, was received by the Princess. The writer suggested that Caroline might be led into an affair of gallantry, and offered to be convenient on such an occasion. "This," says the Earl, "did not frighten the Princess, although it did the Duke and Duchess, and on my perceiving this I told her Lady — would be more cautious than to risk such an audacious measure, and that besides it was death to presume to approach a Princess of Wales, and no man would be daring enough to think of it. She asked me whether I was in earnest. I said such was our law; that anybody who presumed to love her was guilty of high treason, and punished with death if she was weak enough to listen to him; and so also would she. This startled her."

No doubt it did. That day Caroline had much to think about, and much that could not fail to make her dread the step she was about to take, for in addition to the anonymous letter came also an epistle from the King to his sister the Duchess. In this letter His Majesty asked a question which surely he should have put before he proposed that his son should marry the Princess. He expressed a hope that his niece was not too vivacious, and that she would lead a sedentary and retired life! He probably intended the letter for his sister's eyes only, but with the Duchess there was no such thing as secrecy, and she immediately showed the letter to Caroline, to Malmesbury's intense disgust. The words shocked the Princess, and she

must have wondered what kind of world she was soon to enter. No vivacity; merely a humdrum "sedentary and retired life"! How little did pious King George understand his niece! The explanation of such a foolish and belated question may be that George perhaps had qualms of conscience, and was eager to justify himself. He may have persuaded himself that the best way to reform a rake was to marry him to some quiet, retiring, domesticated young woman. If the King really thought so he was most assuredly doomed to disappointment. The Prince of Wales was beyond reformation.

Malmesbury was not above taking note of certain shortcomings in the Princess in directions outside his province. Unfortunately these shortcomings were obvious, and it cannot be said the Earl did not use proper discretion in dealing with them. "I had," he records, "two conversations with the Princess Caroline. One on the toilet, on cleanliness, and on delicacy of speaking. On these points I endeavoured, as far as possible for a man, to inculcate the necessity of great and nice attention to every part of dress, as well to what was hid as to what was seen. (I knew she wore coarse petticoats, coarse shifts, and thread stockings, and these never washed or changed often enough.) I observed a long toilet was necessary, and gave her no credit for boasting that hers was a 'short' one. What I could not say myself on this point I got said through women. It is remarkable how amazingly her education has been neglected, and how much her mother, although an Englishwoman, was inattentive to it."

Poor Princess! It is quite possible she had a hundred faults, but had she had a hundred virtues it would have made her no more acceptable to a prince satiated with so-called pleasure and callous to everything that did not minister to his selfishness. It may also be said that, thanks to Lady Jersey, a mischief had been done

which marriage could not undo but only accentuate, and so the shadow of Caroline's past, whether real or imaginary, pursued her, and her enemies did all they could to make sure it *should* pursue her.

The "marriage by proxy," the essential preliminary to the ceremony in London, took place at Brunswick on December 4, 1794, the Earl of Malmesbury standing for the Prince; and after the lapse of some three weeks the Princess set out for England. The journey, owing to the inclement weather, was an arduous one, and was further prolonged by the illness of the Duchess of Brunswick, and it was not until March 28 that the Princess and her escort arrived at Cuxhaven, and a British squadron conveyed them to Yarmouth. Dr. Doran notes a curious coincidence in connection with the Princess stepping on board H.M.S. *Jupiter*. A young midshipman named Dove handed her a rope in order to assist her, and was thus the first to help her, as it were, into England. Something more than a quarter of a century later he who thus aided the bride was charged with the mission of bringing back the body.

At Yarmouth the royal yacht (*Augusta*) was in waiting, and after a "pleasant and prosperous sail" the party reached Greenwich on April 5. The Princess landed at the Hospital stairs. She was conducted to one of the Governor's rooms which looked out on the quadrangle, in which were assembled groups of maimed Greenwich pensioners. They were nearly the first Englishmen she had seen on their own soil. "Comment," she exclaimed to a lady near her, "*manque-t-il à tous les Anglais un bras ou une jambe ?*" Her little pleasantry was not understood. It was crushed in the bud by a harsh "*Point de persiflage, je vous prie.*" It was the first snub of many she was destined to receive.

The series of indignities which Lady Jersey (or Queen Charlotte through her willing coadjutor)

sought to inflict upon the Princess commenced as soon as she arrived in England. The Queen cannot be held guiltless for what happened. The appointment of Lady Jersey as lady-in-waiting to the Princess was in itself an insult. It is almost incredible, knowing as she did the intimate relations existing between the Prince and Lady Jersey, that the Queen should have given so notorious a woman the post; but so it was. The consequences were seen at the very moment of Caroline's landing at Greenwich. The King's coach should have been waiting for her, but it was an hour late, owing to Lady Jersey not being in readiness. Obviously this was an intentional slight, and part of the conspiracy to make the forlorn bride as uncomfortable as possible.

On her arrival Lady Jersey at once began to give herself airs. Directly she saw the Princess she contemptuously found fault with her dress. Caroline, we are told, wore a white satin gown, a very elegant turban cap of satin trimmed with crêpe and ornamented with white feathers, and whether her costume became her or not, there was no excuse for the insufferable rudeness of the lady-in-waiting. It is satisfactory to find that the latter had her match in Lord Malmesbury, who records that she "expressed herself in a way which induced me to speak rather sharply."

But this was a trifle compared with the impertinence which followed. Lady Jersey protested that she could not sit backwards in the coach, and hoped she might be allowed to sit forward, thus practically putting herself on an equality with the Princess. Again the Earl asserted his authority. "As it was strictly forbidden by the King," he records, "I most decidedly opposed, and told Lady Jersey that, as she must have known that riding backwards in the coach disagreed with her, she ought never to have accepted the station of lady of the bedchamber; and that if she really was likely



to be sick, I would put Mrs. Aston in the coach with the Princess, and have by that means the pleasure of Lady Jersey's company in the carriage allotted to me and Lord Claremont. This of course settled the business. She and Mrs. Harcourt, according to the King's directions, sat backwards, and the Princess sat by herself forward." Lord Malmesbury leaves us in doubt whether he reproved Lady Jersey in the presence of the Princess. If he did so he would most likely have spoken in English, of which Caroline, when she landed, knew not a word, and the Princess would therefore be spared the humiliation of learning Lady Jersey's contemplated insult.

The coaches, escorted by dragoons, took their way to St. James's Palace, viewed by an apathetic crowd. The people at that time had very little interest in the Prince of Wales, save as a personage who spent their money in dissipation, and it was not of the slightest consequence to them whom he married. Indeed, if they knew of the motive of the marriage, they could only have regarded the arrival of the Princess as the prelude to fresh taxation. The time came when Caroline had a very different reception from the citizens of London, for all through the bitter dissensions of after years they sided with the wife and condemned her husband.

The account given by Malmesbury of the first meeting between the future husband and wife is familiar to most students of the times, but it cannot be omitted. The scene is certainly unique of its kind. The Earl writes: "I immediately notified the arrival to the King and Prince of Wales; the last came immediately. I, according to the established etiquette, introduced (no one else being in the room) Princess Caroline to him. She very properly, in consequence of my instructions to her—it was the right mode of proceeding—attempted to kneel to him. He raised her (gracefully enough) and embraced her, said barely one

word, turned to a distant part of the apartment, and calling me to him, said : ‘ Harris, I am not well ; pray get me a glass of brandy.’ I said, ‘ Sir, had you not better have a glass of water ? ’—upon which he, much out of humour, said, with an oath, ‘ No ; I will go directly to the Queen,’ and away he went. The Princess, left during this short moment alone, was in a state of astonishment, and on my joining her, said, ‘ *Mon Dieu ! est ce que le Prince est toujours comme cela ? Je le trouve très gros et nullement aussi beau que son portrait.*’ I said His Royal Highness was naturally a good deal affected during this first interview, but certainly she would find him different at dinner. She was disposed to further criticism on this occasion, which would have embarrassed me very much to answer if luckily the King had not ordered me to attend him.”

The only question the King asked was, “ Is she good-humoured ? ” Malmesbury answered that he had never seen her otherwise, and the King said, “ I am very glad of it.” He said nothing more, and it was manifest from his silence that he had seen the Queen *since* she had talked with the Prince, and that the Prince had made a very unfavourable report of the Princess.

The conduct of the Prince on this occasion is wholly inexplicable, save on the ground we have ventured to put forward, namely, that Lady Jersey had poisoned his mind in regard to Caroline’s indiscretions in her girlhood. Most likely he was tipsy, but that does not make the matter any better. Dr. Doran’s supposition that “ the eyes of the bride had been almost as much offended as the nose of the bridegroom ” must be considered as a piece of smart writing, and Lord Malmesbury’s explanation that doubtless His Royal Highness had been naturally much “ affected ” by the first meeting with his bride-elect may be construed in more than one way. The Prince had probably fortified himself after his usual fashion.

Caroline's behaviour that evening when she dined with the Prince has been described as flippant and in bad taste. It probably seemed so, but it does not follow that the flippancy and the "rattling and affected wit" were not due to overstrain. It is certain that the Princess had had a most trying day. She had endured the insults of Lady Jersey; in addition to what happened when her lady-in-waiting met her at Greenwich, there may have been some disturbing talk between them during the journey to St. James's Palace; and to all this the embarrassing reception by the Prince must have come as a terrible climax. One can readily imagine her tired and depressed, her heart aching at her loneliness, and her mind disturbed by forebodings of a dark and uncertain future. Is it wonderful, when all this is remembered, that her nerves should be disturbed?

We are told how the Princess behaved, but not a word is said about the conduct of the Prince. Were there no black looks, no intervals of chilling silence, no churlish rejoinders? The probability is that the Prince was sobered into moroseness; for later in the evening, when the King and Queen waited on the Princess, his Majesty did not fail to note his son's coldness and indifference. The good-natured monarch tried to make up for the Prince's shortcomings, but the Queen was distant, and the Princesses, her daughters, followed her example.

Three days went over, and the marriage was solemnised in the Chapel Royal, St. James's, the proceedings being marked by incidents which augured badly for the happiness of the newly-married couple. There had been a family dinner previous to the ceremony, which took place in the evening, and the Royal bridegroom had done his best to strengthen his courage with brandy. In the church he was pale as death, and, but for the Duke of Bedford, he would have been precipitated in front of the altar rails. Towards the

end of the service he pulled himself together, and in a muddled way, thinking all was at an end, attempted to rise from his knees, but, prompted by a whisper from the King, resumed his position. The Archbishop of Canterbury was very nervous, and evidently was thinking of the marriage the Prince had already contracted, for on coming to the words, "if any person knowing of a lawful impediment," paused, laid down the prayer book, and his eyes rested first on the King and then on the bridegroom. The latter shed a few maudlin tears, the Archbishop "twice repeated the passage in which the Prince engages to live from that time in nuptial felicity with his consort," and all was over.

In contrast with the agitation of the Prince was the conduct of the Princess. According to the Jerningham Letters, "Her Royal Highness behaved gravely and decently during the ceremony . . . but was in the greatest joy possible going to the Chapel, and did nothing but chatter with the Duke of Clarence while she was waiting with him at the altar for the arrival of the Prince." Would it be unreasonable to suggest that this aspect of the Princess was due more to nervousness than to joy?

Whatever may be the explanation of her demeanour, it is certain that from the moment Caroline set foot in England she was surrounded by women whose interest it was to render her odious in the sight of her husband. The odd thing was that with all her cleverness she should have had so little discernment as to become a dupe to their devices. One of these ladies told her that the Prince was a great admirer of a fine head of hair. "Now you know," she once said to Lady de Clifford, "we Germans are very proud of this ornament, so the moment the Prince and I were alone, I took out my comb, and let my hair flow over my shoulders; but, my dear," she added with a loud laugh, "I only wish you could have seen the poor man's face."

We now approach a matter which we desire to treat with the utmost restraint—indeed, it might be passed over altogether, but that it has an important bearing on the subject of these memoirs. The investigations of Professor Clerici into certain events in the life of Queen Caroline can hardly be ignored. They suggest the existence of a mystery, of a secret, which pursued husband and wife like a black shadow, and which *may* explain the attitude of hostility and dislike that the Prince continually showed towards Princess Charlotte. It is perhaps best to let Professor Clerici speak for himself, and we take the following from Mr. Frederick Chapman's admirable translation, published under the title of "A Queen of Indiscretions":

"The first night of the marriage was, in its not impenetrable mystery, everything that the mind can conceive of the tragic and vulgar intermixed. Certain it is that the Prince of Wales did not pass it upon the nuptial bed; but that *adhesit corpus suum* until the approach of dawn. At that hour the pages heard cries proceeding from the nuptial chamber, and shortly afterwards saw the bridegroom rush out violently. Various rumours went abroad: there was talk of drunkenness and of compromising discoveries; some maintained that a potion of malignant effect had been administered to the bride; some hinted at other things."

In connection with this delicate subject, Caroline's own words may be quoted. Talking one day to her lady-in-waiting, Lady Charlotte Campbell, she said: "Judge what it was to have a drunken husband on one's wedding-day, and one who passed the greatest part of his bridal-night under the grate, where he fell, and where I left him. If anybody say to me at this moment—will you pass your life over again, or be killed? I would choose death; for you know, a little sooner or later we must all die; but to live a life of wretchedness twice over—oh! mine God, no!" A

poignant recollection indeed, whatever it may have concealed.

Professor Clerici's speculations in regard to the mystery take two forms, one being the alternative to the other. From his point of view "the Prince of Wales was probably in the same psycho-physical condition that Jean Jacques Rousseau repeatedly describes as his own in his 'Confessions'." The Professor gives his reasons for this theory, which need not be gone into here ; it will suffice to say that in Stendhal's subtle study of sexual psychology, "Le Rouge et le Noir," will be found an incident which is sufficiently analogous to satisfy those who care to follow the line of Clerici's surmises. The conclusion the Professor arrives at he presents in this way: "Who can say at this date whether the mystery which enveloped the birth of the Princess Charlotte had not some connection with what we suggest? It is useless to demand an explanation of how Caroline could possibly have become a mother at the appointed time in view of such a condition on the part of her husband, for court mysteries are much more easily realised than explained. As to ways and means, no very serious difficulties would be presented, as there would be occasion only for dissimulation of a not very complicated character."

Thus far one may agree with Professor Clerici. Every Court in Europe has its family secrets, and no good purpose would be served by endeavouring to drag these secrets into the light. All that need be said in regard to Princess Charlotte is that in trying to arrive at a fair estimate of the feelings of her mother and father towards her, one is startled, now and again, by words inadvertently let fall, sometimes by the Prince, sometimes by the Princess, which mysteriously point to the existence of a spectre in the background in connection with the child. In at least two of her letters Caroline alludes darkly to this spectre, and in each case there is no response from the Prince, as

though he dared not defy his wife to tell the truth. Here the mystery must be left. It could hardly be passed over in view of the involved circumstances surrounding Charlotte's life and of the extraordinary attitude adopted towards her at times by the Prince.

## CHAPTER III

1795—1796

Unhappiness of Caroline—Lady Jersey again—The Prince insults his wife—His determination to separate from her—Coldness of the Queen and her daughters—Birth of Princess Charlotte—Indifference of the Prince—His extraordinary attitude towards the Corporation of London—Negotiations between the Prince and Princess for separating—A mysterious allusion in Caroline's letter—Carlton House a "Pandora's Box" of vice—John M'Mahon—His strange history.

THE first quarrel between husband and wife took place one day when the Princess refused to dine with Lady Jersey if the Prince were not present. She also declined to converse with her lady-in-waiting at any time. The Prince was very angry, and he left the Princess to live by herself at Carlton House for several weeks. The Princess wrote to the King, who interposed, and something resembling a reconciliation took place, but it was too evident there would never be any peace while Lady Jersey was on the scene.

According to Huish, the Duke of Gloucester asserted that when Lady Jersey first set out to meet the Princess there was an understanding that she should always be the object of the Prince's affections. At the time Huish published this statement the Duke was dead, and an application was made to his son in regard to the truth of the story. The conviction of the son was that his father was never a party to such a conversation, and it seems almost incredible



that anything of the kind ever took place. If it did, one can only say that the effrontery of Lady Jersey is easily explained.

Caroline, at all events, perfectly realised her position. In one of her bursts of confidence to Lady Charlotte Campbell she said, "I, you know, was the victim of mammon; the Prince of Wales's debts must be paid, and poor little I's person was the pretence. Parliament would vote supplies for the Heir-Apparent's marriage; the King would help his little help. A Protestant Princess must be found—they fixed upon the Prince's cousin. To tell you God's truth (a favourite expression) I always hated it; but to oblige my father any thing. But the first moment I saw my *futur* and Lady J(erse)y together, I knew how it all was, and I said to myself, 'Oh, very well!' I took my *partie*—and so it would have been, if—but, oh, mine God!" she added, throwing up her head, "I could be the slave of a man I love; but one whom I love not, and who did not love me, impossible—c'est autre chose." She went on to say:

"One of the civil things His Royal Highness did just at first was to find fault with my shoes; and, as I was very young and lively in those days, I told him to make me a better pair, and bring them to me. I brought letters from all the Princes and Princesses to him, from all the petty Courts, and I tossed them to him, and said, 'There—that's to prove I'm not an impostor!'"

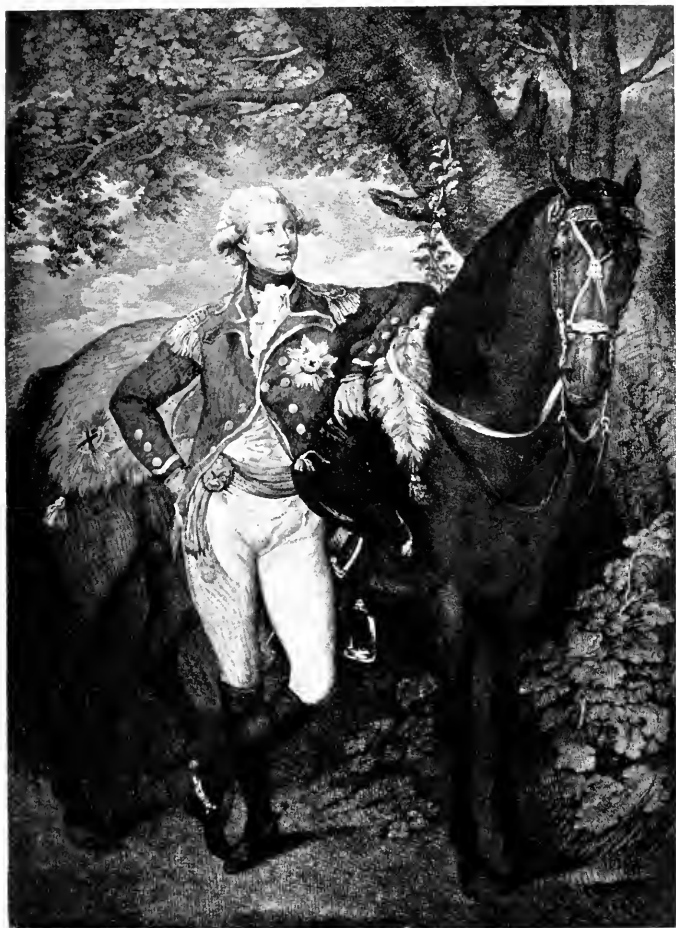
Upon this Lady Oxford, who was present, observed: "Well, Madam, it is the most surprising thing in the world that the Prince was not desperately in love with your Royal Highness." "Not at all," she replied. "In the first place, very few husbands love their wives; and, I confess, the moment one is obliged to marry any person, it is enough to render them hateful. Had I come over here as a Princess, with my father, on a visit, as Mr. Pitt once wanted my father to have done

things might have been very different ; but what is done cannot be undone." "What a delightful Court we should have now," said one of the party, "if Her Royal Highness was Queen!" "I never wish to be Queen," replied the Princess ; "the Queen's mother is enough for me!"

The Prince took every opportunity of wounding the Princess by showing her that Lady Jersey was her rival. The ornaments with which he had decked his wife's arms he took from her and gave to his mistress, who wore them in her presence. He ridiculed her person, and suffered Lady Jersey to do so in the most open and offensive manner. And finally, according to Lady Charlotte Campbell, he wrote to Her Royal Highness that he intended never to consider her as his wife—not even though such a misfortune should befall him as the death of his only child.

No wonder Caroline detested Lady Jersey, but of Mrs. Fitzherbert she had a very different opinion. She once said of her : "That is the Prince's true wife ; she is an excellent woman ; it is a great pity for him he ever broke with her. Do you know I know a man who was present at his marriage, the late Lord B(radford). He declared to a friend of mine that when he went to inform Mrs. Fitzherbert that the Prince had married me, she would not believe it, for she knew she was herself married to him."

Months of unhappiness went over, and in due course it was made known to the nation that a successor to the throne might shortly be born. There was great rejoicing at the prospect, and the Prince himself was pleased. The malicious said his joy arose from the fact that one of the objects of his marriage was about to be realised, and that when attained he would throw off the last vestige of a pretence of affection for his wife, and go his own way. Whether this was so or not, it is certain that, at the time when a woman needs most the encouragement and support of her



GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES.

From an engraving by A. Cardon after Gainsborough.



own sex, Queen Charlotte and her daughters treated the Princess with coldness and neglect. Was there any reason for this beyond dislike of the mother? The approaching event was one of great importance to the royal family, yet it was regarded with indifference by the female portion of that family. The King was Caroline's only friend, and the question suggests itself whether he knew as much of the "mystery" as the Queen. The King was far too simple-minded to plot, but his wife was very different. She worked against the Princess before the marriage, and she kept up a system of espionage afterwards. What was her motive? Was it part of the "mystery"? Who can say? "The Queen," said the Princess on one occasion, "from the very first time I saw her frowned upon me, and very little I said or did pleased her."

The secret history of the family complications at this time is very difficult to penetrate. Now and again something is revealed which shows that not only is a connected narrative impossible, but that much is missing which would explain what at present can only be conjecture. A letter from the King to the Prince given in Brougham's "Autobiography" is one of these isolated revelations, and suggests that the strained relations between father and son arising out of the latter's treatment of his wife, and also bearing upon the birth of Charlotte, were of a much more bitter character than other records would lead one to suppose. The letter runs thus :

"GEORGIUS REX,

"The professions you have lately made in your letters of your particular regard to me are so contradictory to your actions that I cannot suffer myself to be imposed upon by them. You know very well you did not give the least intimation to me or to the Queen that the Princess was with child till within a month of the birth of the young Princess.

“ You removed the Princess twice in the week immediately preceding the day of her delivery, from the place of my residence, in expectation (as you voluntarily declared) of her labour ; and both times, upon your return, you industriously concealed from the knowledge of me and the Queen every circumstance relating to this important affair ; and you at last, without giving notice to me or to the Queen, precipitately hurried the Princess from Hampton Court in a condition not to be named. After having thus, in execution of your own determined measures, exposed both the Princess and her child to the greatest perils, you now plead surprise and tenderness for the Princess as the only motives that occasioned these repeated indignities to me, and to the Queen your mother.

“ This extravagant and ungrateful behaviour in so essential a point as the birth of an heir to my crown, is such an evidence of your premeditated defiance of me, and such a contempt of my authority, and of the natural right belonging to your parents, as cannot be excused by the pretended innocence of your intentions, nor palliated or disguised by specious words only ; but the whole tenour of your conduct for a considerable time has been so entirely void of all real duty to me, that I have long had reason to be highly offended with you, and until you withdraw your regard and confidence from those by whose instigation and advice you are aided and encouraged in your unwarrantable behaviour to me and to the Queen, and until you return to your duty, you shall not reside in my palace, which I will not suffer to be made the resort of them who, under the appearance of an attachment to you, foment the division which you have made in my family, and thereby weakened the common interest of the whole.

“ In this situation I will receive no reply ; but when your actions manifest a just sense of your duty and

submission, that may induce me to pardon what at present I most justly resent.

“In the meantime, it is my pleasure that you leave St. James’s with all your family, when it can be done without prejudice or inconvenience to the Princess.

“I shall for the present leave to the Princess the care of my granddaughter, until a proper time calls upon me to consider of her education.

“G. R.”

Brougham has no comment on this remarkable outburst of anger, and the exact date of the letter is uncertain. Apparently it was obtained from the Princess, who, Brougham tells us, was of opinion that “it must have been long before the famous session of 1809, and the Duke of York’s business (*i.e.* The Pension Fund scandal), which to a certain degree had lessened the quarrels of the royal family among themselves, making them feel the necessity of hanging together while there was such a public clamour against them.” All that can be said is that the conduct of the Prince previous to the birth of Charlotte would seem to have been actuated by a feeling deeper than that of a merely personal hatred of his wife; and that of this feeling there may be an explanation, the nature of which is not unconnected with the “mystery.”

The Princess Charlotte was born at Carlton House on January 7, 1796, exactly nine calendar months less one day from the date of her mother’s marriage. According to the Annual Register the personages present at the birth—of course in a formal, official sense—were the Duke of Gloucester, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President of the Council, the Duke of Leeds, the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Cholmondeley (Lord Chamberlain), the Earl of Jersey (Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales), Lord Thurlow, and the Ladies of Her Royal Highness’s Bedchamber. The

Prince showed no emotion of any kind when the baby was presented to him. "It's a fine child," was all he said, and quitted the room.

The list of studied slights inflicted on the Princess by her husband was added to by his extraordinary behaviour in regard to the address of congratulation voted by the Corporation of London. In reply to the letter of announcement, Lord Cholmondeley, who was at the head of the Prince's household, wrote to the Lord Mayor, stating that "the Prince of Wales being under the necessity of reducing his establishment, he was precluded from receiving the address in a manner suitable to his station." The Prince, however, was good enough to add that copies of the address might be sent to him.

The Corporation was naturally indignant, for it was well known that His Royal Highness did not scruple to squander money where his pleasures were concerned, and Mr. Deputy Birch ("Pattypan Birch," the founder of the world-famous pastrycook's business in Cornhill) moved "that this Court is of opinion that it cannot consistently with its own dignity suffer the said compliments to be presented in any other way than the customary form." This rebuke brought the Prince to book: he apologised; but for all that there was no official reception, and in adhering to his point, under the paltry plea of limited means, he effectually prevented himself from being publicly associated with the Princess on so notable an occasion. One is entitled to think there was something more than a desire to spite the Princess rankling in the Prince's mind, and that whatever was the cause, it was accentuated by the birth of Charlotte.

The quarrels between the royal couple continued. The Prince went off to Windsor, and afterwards to Brighton, with Mrs. Fitzherbert and Lady Jersey, and, instead of answering a letter sent to him by the Princess, merely directed the Countess Cholmondeley



to suggest the propriety of a separation. Matters drifted on through the early months of 1796, and on the Princess asking that the Prince should put his wishes and proposition in writing, His Royal Highness replied with the following letter, which has become historical :

“MADAM,

“As Lord Cholmondeley informs me you wish I would define in writing the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavour to explain on that head with as much clearness and as much propriety as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is however in our power ; let our intercourse therefore be restricted to that, and I will distinctly subscribe to the condition which you required through Lord Cholmondeley, that even in the event of an accident happening to my daughter (which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert) I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction by proposing at any period a connection of a more particular nature. I shall now close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity.

“I am, Madam,

“With great truth

“Very sincerely yours,

“GEORGE P.”

WINDSOR CASTLE,

*April 30, 1796.*

The “condition” alluded to was Caroline’s determination that, if a separation took place, she would never under any circumstance live with the Prince again as husband and wife.

The Princess replied in French, as her knowledge of English was insufficient to permit her to express herself as she wished. Her letter ran thus :

“ SIR,

“ The avowal of your conversation with Lord Cholmondeley neither surprises nor offends me ; it merely confirms what you tacitly insinuated for this twelvemonth. But after this, it would be a want of delicacy or rather an unworthy weakness in me, were I to complain of those conditions which you impose on yourself. I should have returned no answer to your letter if it had not been conceived in terms to make it doubtful whether this arrangement proceeds from you or from me ; and you are aware that the honour of it *belongs to you alone*. The letter which you announce to me as the last obliges me to communicate to the King, as to my sovereign and my father, both your avowal and my answer. You will find enclosed a copy of my letter to the King. I apprise you of it that I may not incur the slightest reproach of duplicity from you. As I have at this moment no protector but His Majesty, I refer myself solely to him upon this subject ; and if my conduct meets with his approbation, I shall be in some degree, at least, consoled. I retain every sentiment of gratitude for the situation in which I find myself, as Princess of Wales, enabled by your means to indulge in the free exercise of a virtue dear to my heart—charity. It will be my duty, likewise, to act upon another motive—that of giving an example of patience and resignation under every trial. Do me the justice to believe that I shall never cease to pray for your happiness, and to be,

“ Your much devoted

“ CAROLINE.”

May 6, 1796.

In the Princess's reply there is, as Professor Clerici

has not failed to note, an allusion to "something" known only to her and her husband, and expressed in the words which we have italicised. Did the letter Caroline wrote to the King, a copy of which she enclosed in her letter to the Prince, throw any light on the mystery? It is quite possible. The secret between the Prince and Princess was one which concerned the child, and if the second supposition of Professor Clerici had any foundation, the King could hardly have been kept in ignorance. The Princess once made reference to this period of darkness, and certain words she used—there is no need to quote them precisely—add to the mystery. Talking to her lady-in-waiting, so often the recipient of her reminiscences, she said: "I began to be *enceinte*, and all de wise people said so; but I pitied dem, for I no more believed it dan any ting for a long time. At last, Charlotte was born. Well, after I lay in—*je vous jure* 'tis true; upon my honour, upon my soul, 'tis true—I received a message, through Lord Cholmondeley, to tell me I never was to have de great honour of inhabiting de same room wid my husband again. I said very well—but, as my memory was short, I begged to have dis polite message in writing from him. I had it—and vas free—I left Carlton House and went to Charlton. Oh! how happy I was! Everybody blamed me, but I never repented me of dis step. Oh! my God, what I have suffered! Luckily I had a spirit, or I never should have outlived it." At this point speculation must cease. Secrets affecting royalty are well kept, and this one was of vital importance, for it concerned the Crown of England.

Whatever may have been the truth, appearances had to be maintained, and it was only natural that the King should be terribly distressed, and that he should do his best to smooth matters over. Ultimately some kind of peace was patched up, and it was arranged that Caroline should be free to leave Carlton House,

but that apartments there should be reserved for her which she might occasionally visit.

This obviously was a compromise which was certain to break down. Carlton House at this time was described by Huish as "a Pandora's Box filled with treachery and vice. The immediate associates of the Prince, male and female, were distinguished for their immorality of conduct, their licentiousness and debauchery. Scenes of the most indecent nature were daily and nightly practised under its roof, which, as it was now the residence of a virtuous wife and a mother, ought to have been uncontaminated by the presence of the harlot or the libertine."

Huish singles out for especial condemnation John M'Mahon, who, he represents, was a "finished adept at intrigue, an artful seducer of a wife's affections, a husband who would leave his residence at one door while a Prince entered at another, and absent himself for the night." The freely spoken historian further asserts that M'Mahon was the confidant and companion of the Prince of Wales, and was more deeply implicated in some of the amorous transactions of His Royal Highness than any of his predecessors who held the same office. Huish, whose style as a rule is very stilted, is direct enough in dealing with this personage. He says, "We can point to two ladies now living, the mothers of families and moving in a most respectable station of life, who, but for the intricate skill of John M'Mahon, would never have reposed in the arms of His Royal Highness, and we could point to another lady, in the person of Mrs. M'Mahon herself, to the effect of whose charms on the heart of the present most illustrious personage in the kingdom was solely owing the aggrandisement and elevation of her pliant and accommodating husband."

M'Mahon, we are told, was a natural son of a butler in the service of the first Lord Leitrim, and his mother was a chambermaid in the same family. In his boy-

hood he cleaned boots and shoes, and when a young man he obtained a situation as an exciseman, but he soon threw up regular employment and took to living on his wits. With the proprietor of *The Limerick Chronicle* and a "few other literary tradesmen" he formed a sort of debating society, each person to pay 6½d. admission. The novelty proved a success, and the promoters netted some £500. After this M'Mahon obtained a petty clerkship in the Treasury, but regular work was not to his liking, and, throwing up the post, he joined a company of strolling players, and here his talents in the direction of intrigue began to develop. While acting the character of Scrub in *The Beaux' Stratagem*, at Ennis, County Clare, he attracted the notice of Mr. William English, better known as "Buck" English, and to this individual he was exceedingly useful.

"Buck" English is described as one of the most extraordinary characters of the day. As his nickname implies, he was a gallant—of a rough and ready kind, and, aware of his deficiencies in the subtler phases of amatory adventures, he saw how the adroit and persuasive M'Mahon could help him. English acquired his wealth in a very singular way. His father, who was a day labourer, being at work on some land at Thornhill, County Tipperary, found a large earthen vase filled with gold. This vase was supposed to have been hidden on the arrival of Cromwell at the siege of Clonmel; and with the money old English purchased land and houses, and amassed a fortune which he left to his son. "Buck" English fought two duels, in both of which he killed his antagonist, and when in England he distinguished himself by killing a waiter at an inn and having the murder charged in the bill at £50!

"Buck" English had a forcible and unpleasant method of asserting his authority, and when M'Mahon refused to play the part of Scrub to amuse his patron's drunken friends English attacked the disobedient

actor with a stick, and the latter narrowly escaped the fate of the waiter. In a half-dead condition M'Mahon was removed to the cottage of a poor widow, and, as he was utterly penniless, a lieutenant of the 33rd regiment, who chanced to be in the town recruiting, made himself responsible for his board and lodging. Some years after, when M'Mahon was living on the fat of the land in Carlton House, and the good-hearted lieutenant had fallen on evil days, the latter sent in his bill, which in its way is a curiosity. Among other items we read: "Paid Rose Burne for your lodgings one fortnight, 7*s.* 9*d.* Paid T. Coney for dressing your hair a fortnight, 2*s.* 8½*d.* Paid your washer-woman, 2*s.* 2*d.* Paid for your supper and gin toddy, 2*s.* 2*d.* Paid T. Coney, hair dresser, for a comb, powder, and pomatum, 2*s.* 5*d.* Paid a tailor for mending and seating a pair of black breeches, 1*s.* 9*d.* Paid for covering your hat, 1*s.* 3*d.*" The bill came to £3 7*s.* 3½*d.*, and it is only fair to say that M'Mahon discharged it with three guineas added, and that he subsequently obtained an ensigncy for one of the lieutenant's sons.

It is not necessary to follow M'Mahon's career between the time of his leaving Tipperary and the hour when, through the influence of one of the Royal Dukes, to whom he had been useful in an intrigue, he became installed at Carlton House as a sort of "general utility"; it will be sufficient to say that with the Prince of Wales he had plenty of scope for his peculiar talents. When he was first appointed his income as a half-pay officer was only £60 per annum, but he soon began to make money, first by disposing of tickets at 15*s.* and £1 1*s.* each, for viewing the interior of Carlton House; and secondly by procuring situations and titles, which were paid for according to the emoluments to be received. In one instance a gentleman applied to him to obtain a peerage, and £5,000 was offered. The offer was rejected;

the sum was then doubled, and the peerage was secured. When Lady M'Mahon was on her death-bed she bade Sir John, her husband, open a particular drawer, and in it he found, to his great astonishment, £14,000 in Bank of England notes, obtained entirely by the exercise of her influence over several branches of the Royal Family in obtaining commissions and other appointments under Government. At that time everybody was grabbing at sinecures and well-paid posts, and the wholesale transactions of this kind engaged in afterwards by Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, of whom we shall have something to say in its proper place, were no novelties.

The number of "good things" which dropped into M'Mahon's lap will probably never be known. One instance of a barefaced attempt to bag a sinecure may, however, be mentioned. When Fox died the office of Paymaster of the Widows' Pensions became vacant. It was worth £2,000, and the duties were less than nominal, so much so that its abolition was suggested. Instead, however, it was proposed to be given to M'Mahon. Creevey moved for a committee of inquiry. Creevey's amendment was lost; but, on the Army Estimates being brought up, the amount of the Paymaster's salary was omitted, and in this way the matter was shelved. To console M'Mahon for his disappointment the Prince nominated him his private secretary and Keeper of the Privy Purse. The appointment, however, was so disapproved of by the ministers, that it lapsed, like the sinecure. M'Mahon afterwards, however, became a pensioner on the privy purse.

M'Mahon appears to have been useful, not only to the Prince, but to the Prince's brothers, for it is said he was the principal agent in the shameful business of procuring Mrs. Jordan, the actress, for the Duke of Clarence. There are other instances of his abilities in this direction, but we have said enough to

show the kind of persons surrounding the Prince of Wales, who pandered to his vices and who fooled him to the top of his bent.

Huish is somewhat vague as to the date when M'Mahon took up his post at Carlton House. His words would lead one to believe that scenes of debauchery were enacted while the Princess and her baby were within its walls, but this can hardly be credited. Soon after Charlotte was born a nursery establishment was set up under the superintendence of Lady Elgin, and though the latter lived in her own house, there was a resident sub-governess in the person of Miss Hayman. This lady in her letters has given her experience during the three months she was in office, and had there been anything approaching to what Huish describes she must have known of it. But there is not a word in her correspondence to justify the comparison of a "Pandora's Box filled with treachery and vice." When such a condition of affairs existed it must have been either prior to the birth of Charlotte or after the Princess of Wales ceased to visit Carlton House.



## CHAPTER IV

1797

Carlton House—Persecution of the Princess—The story of the intercepted letters—Queen Charlotte's bitter hatred—Caroline leaves Carlton House, but her child remains—The early years of Princess Charlotte—She is taken to Buckingham House—The King's fondness of her—Her life at Carlton House—Caroline asks that Charlotte may be allowed to live with her at Charlton—The Prince returns no answer—Hannah More and the Princess Charlotte—The Duchess of Würtemberg's views on the education of the young Princess—She advises the rod.

CARLTON HOUSE, where the Princess resided until a few weeks after Charlotte was born, was once the most-talked-of mansion in London. It would be difficult now for many Londoners to locate its situation precisely. The site is occupied by Carlton House Terrace, and relics of the house itself remain in some of the marble mantelpieces and friezes of Buckingham Palace, and in the columns in front of the National Gallery, whither they were removed when the house was pulled down in 1828. It looked northward, and the forecourt was separated from Pall Mall by a long range of pillars, handsome in themselves but supporting nothing. Of these columns this couplet was written :

“Care Colonne, qui state qua ?  
Non sapiame in verita,”

rendered into English by Prince Hoare thus :

“Dear little columns all in a row,  
What do you do there ?  
Indeed we don't know.”

This colonnade of single pillars simply holding up a cornice was very inartistic, and the only purpose it served was to form an obstruction to the view in front of the house. Thackeray writes: "When I first saw England she was in mourning for the young Princess Charlotte, the hope of the empire. With my childish attendant I remember peeping through the colonnade at Carlton House, and seeing the abode of the Prince Regent. I can yet see the guards pacing before the gates of the palace. What palace? The palace exists no more than the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. It is but a name now."

From the modern point of view it is hard to say whether Carlton House was a magnificent palace or an inconveniently arranged house with numerous rooms, some of them spacious enough, and others small and mean in appearance. The architects of the eighteenth and of the early part of the nineteenth centuries had queer ideas, especially when they were called upon to make an old house into a new one. This was the case with Carlton House, for it was "modernised" in 1788 and extensive alterations were made in 1815. The author of the "Beauties of England and Wales" wrote a glowing account of the building, but this was after the later alterations, and the Carlton House where the Princess passed the early days of her married life was the old building.

There are few records of these early days. That those days were miserable ones we may be sure. The position of the Princess, surrounded as she was by intriguing enemies, was painful and embarrassing, and became worse after the birth of Charlotte. Secret influences were operating to widen the breach between husband and wife, and it soon was apparent that a reconciliation could hardly be hoped for. The Princess was subjected to all manner of petty annoyances. Mr. Louis Melville says that at Brighton tricks were played upon her, such as mixing spirits surreptitiously with her

drinks, and giving her horses difficult to manage, so that she should make a ridiculous appearance in public.

There was, however, so much gossip and scandal afloat at this time that the truth is rather difficult to get at. Lady Charlotte Campbell, in one of her intimate revelations, exclaims: “Poor Princess! she was an ill-treated woman, but a very wrong-headed one. Had she remained quietly at Carlton House, and conducted herself with silent dignity, how different might have been her lot! It is true, as her privy purse, Miss Hayman, once told a person of my acquaintance, she was so insulted whilst there that every bit of furniture was taken out of the rooms she dined in, except two shabby chairs; and the pearl bracelets, which had been given her by the Prince, were taken from her, to decorate the arms of Lady J(erse)y. Still, had the Princess had the courage which arises from principle, and not that which is merely the offspring of a daring spirit, she would have sat out the storm, and weathered it.”

Miss Hayman, the lady alluded to by Lady Charlotte, gives a totally different version of the affair of the furniture. Miss Hayman, who was Charlotte’s first governess, and was afterwards taken into the service of Princess Caroline, disliked Lady Charlotte and her “Diary.” The first she called “Hermaphrodite,” in allusion to the whimsical fancy the diarist had in her later volumes of posing as a man, and the second she thought was “abominable,” and her “blood boiled throughout the perusal of it.” Writing to Miss Williams Wynn (presumably the authoress of “The Diaries of a Lady of Quality,” to which reference has already been made) Miss Hayman says with much indignation:

“I do not know where you are or where you will get this, but I remember my promise to give you for *your private ear* (no, eye) my first impressions of this

abominable book. My blood boil'd throughout the perusal of it, and I cannot bear to believe Lady Ch. Bury to be the Hermaphrodite author, though alas, she shows through both characters. She came late into the service of the Princess, therefore her representation of the tyranny of the Prince and his uniform ill-usage her Ladyship can only judge of from others. I was in the establishment twenty years, and therefore can judge better of many circumstances she asserts so boldly. What ill-usage Her R.H. sustained from the Prince and Lady Jersey in the early days of the marriage I can say nothing but what, like Lady Charlotte, I have been told. The consequent separation had taken place before I went to Princess Charlotte, but the Princess still inhabited Carlton House. There was then no sort of restriction. The Princess saw her child whenever she pleased. H.R.H. obtained the Prince's permission to remove to Charlton for change of air, and soon after a house on Blackheath was taken for the nursery, as near to Charlton as could be got, and every succeeding year the summer residence of the Princess Charlotte was as near as could be found to Blackheath, when the Princess resided there. One house was on the heath, *very near*, and a month has elapsed without her going to see her child, for whom she never showed a fondness—there was no 'tyranny' in this proceeding, and I do believe if she had not made so many unfounded complaints that she might have done what she pleased in the retirement she had chosen. When I left the Princess Charlotte the Princess did me the honour to wish me to live with her. The Prince objected to providing a new place after the establishment had been arranged with the King, but when Miss Vanneek died he appointed me privy purse *unsolicited* by anybody, which was intended to oblige the Princess after his late refusal. The first year at Blackheath the Prince complained of as too expensive, and proposed a



FRANCES, COUNTESS OF JERSEY.



distinct allowance should be made, which the Princess much approved. Mr. Payne and others came over and enquired from the head of every department what sum was required for that department, and from this they calculated the sum necessary to support the family in the way the Princess had chosen to live. All was satisfactory to H.R.H. at first, but as Lady Charlotte, or rather Hermaphrodite, observes, 'Nothing was so long.' Early in the book poor I am said to have told somebody that 'Only two old chairs were in the Princess's apartment at Carlton House.' I remember no such thing. The rooms were not touched till the Princess from many months' absence might be fairly supposed to have relinquished them, and the Prince destined them for another purpose. However, as soon as she heard alterations were made she went there, and possibly found no chairs there at all. I remember hearing the luncheon was taken, but there was no place to eat it on, and no doubt the being sick of the fear of these morning visits made the Prince glad to seize the first plausible moment for supposing they were ended, and to this time I believe he would have done anything to make her comfortable at a distance from him."

The words "at a distance from him" no doubt express the Prince's sentiments. Miss Hayman, it may be observed, came under the spell of the Prince's fascinating manner. She thought that "never had anyone such captivating manners. I could have cried that he was not all he ought to be."

It is worthy of note that the women who knew both husband and wife were inclined to be censorious towards the Princess and indulgent to the Prince. Very rarely do we meet with condemnation of the Prince's conduct from the feminine pen. The men, on the other hand, were the Princess's champions, and she had some staunch ones when the marital dissensions became public property—notably Brougham,

Perceval, and Whitbread, the brewer, and owner of Drury Lane theatre, the burning of which was the occasion of Horace and James Smith's well-known "Rejected Addresses."

Whatever truth there may have been in the gossip which found publicity, spite was at work to injure the Princess as much as possible; and there was ample proof of this in regard to the complicated business of the intercepted letters. Writing to her friends in Brunswick the Princess entrusted the packet to Dr. Randolph, at that time Bishop of Oxford, who was about to proceed to the Continent. This packet never reached its destination, but found its way to Queen Charlotte, who had the satisfaction of reading what her daughter-in-law thought of her. The mystery was never cleared up, but it was believed, and openly stated, that Lady Jersey's was the intercepting hand. Dr. Randolph, however, was regarded as not wholly guiltless, and a very pretty correspondence on the subject followed between his lordship and Lord Jersey.

The Rev. Erskine Neale, in his "Life of the Duke of Kent," has an illuminating reference to this curious business. He says: "The Doctor from some private hindrance abandoned his intention of going abroad and returned the packet of letters. But, with the most culpable and inconceivable carelessness, Dr. Randolph never demanded an audience of the Princess to return to her in person her private letters; never sought an interview with any one of her ladies-in-waiting for that purpose; never gave himself any personal concern fully and carefully to discharge himself of the trust reposed upon him. All he did was to book at the Golden Cross for Brighton by *coach* as a parcel, a packet containing the Princess's correspondence; nor did he even acquaint the Princess by letter that he had done so! Nor did he take any pains to ascertain that this important parcel had



reached its destination. . . . The anxious writer never saw one of them again, but they were extant and used against her. By agency never explained they had passed into the hands of an unscrupulous foe, were read, divulged, and distorted. The main promoter of this deed was a woman ! ”

Huish remarks in reference to this matter, “ The apparent quarrel between Dr. Randolph and Lady Jersey was always said by the Princess to have been merely a shallow manœuvre to exonerate each other, and her belief always was that Lady Jersey either received the packet from Dr. Randolph or directed him to transmit it under cover to the Queen.” The point is not material, but it may be mentioned, in passing, that the appointment of Dr. Randolph to the see of London at the earliest opportunity is not without significance. The result of this treachery can be imagined. The Queen was furious at the contents of the letters : the Prince was only too glad to have an accusation to fling at his wife ; the Princess ceased to visit Carlton House, and the separation was looked upon as complete.

It soon became evident that Carlton House was henceforth impossible as a residence for the Princess Caroline, and she took a house at Charlton, near Shooter’s Hill. We get a glimpse of her life and that of her little daughter from Lady Rose Weigall’s “ Brief Memoir of Princess Charlotte.” In the summer of 1797 the Princess of Wales was constantly backward and forward between Charlton and Carlton House, coming most days to play with her daughter in Miss Hayman’s room or in the nursery ; but never encountering the Prince, who on his part avoided the nursery to escape meeting her.

Miss Hayman’s account of her first meeting with the Princess Charlotte shows the characteristics of the child. “ My little charge,” she writes, “ was playing about. I took no notice of her at first, except

to admire her great beauty and great likeness to the Prince. She soon began to notice me; showed all her treasures and played all her little antics, which are numerous. She is the merriest little thing I ever saw—pepper-hot too: if contradicted she kicks her little feet about in a great rage, but the cry ends in a laugh before you know well which it is.”

Soon after her appointment Miss Hayman took the baby to see the King and Queen at Buckingham House, known then as the “Queen’s House,” and still better known now as Buckingham Palace. The Princess of Wales was not permitted to accompany her daughter, though she attended the drawing-room the same day; but this was simply in accordance with etiquette. Miss Hayman draws an interesting picture of the domestic side of the Court. It was the King’s birthday, and she says, “I have just returned from the Queen’s House, and have seen the whole Royal Family assembled. The King took Princess Charlotte from her nurse and carried her into another room, which produced the first cry I have heard; however, she soon recovered her good-humour, and played with her grandpapa on the carpet a long while. All seem to dote on her, and even the Prince played with her. The Prince of Wales was there, and she seemed to know him from the rest extremely well.”

Still more interesting is what Miss Hayman has to say concerning the little Princess’s doings later on in the day. “When we returned from our visit,” she continued, “we went to tell her (the Princess of Wales) all. She ordered her jewels to be brought for me to see, praising the good taste of the Prince who chose them. . . . The Princess came to the child’s dinner, and when she was dressed for the drawing-room, sent for us down to see her: she looked very pretty. . . . You would have laughed to see the little child doing the popular all day as she has done; we drove twice up and down the park in returning from the Queen’s

House to show her to the crowd assembled there, and she huzzaed and kissed her hand the whole time, and the people looked extremely delighted, running with the coach all the way. This evening she has been doing the same from the window for a full hour to a great mob and all the procession of mail coaches." The child's delightful naturalness, her evident desire to please and be pleased, on this occasion laid the foundation of a popularity which, as she grew up, became attachment and devotion.

Miss Hayman, writing on June 7 of the same year, throws a sidelight upon the position and upon the attitude of the Prince towards the child: "The Prince's time for seeing the child is when dressing or at breakfast. . . . He has not been up here (*i.e.* the nursery), having dropped that custom many months; nor has he sent for the child or seen it since the birthday, but he was some days out of town. I do not often know whether he is at home or abroad. . . . I have not yet seen all this magnificent house; the rooms below the Princess showed me herself, turning up the covers of the chairs and turning them down again, 'like an old housekeeper,' as she said. Her own apartment is extremely fine, and she describes the rest of the house as equally so, 'quite useless,' she says, 'for the bedrooms are too fine for any one to sleep in'; and so much is for show that it is fortunate she has no more children, or they would not be accommodated."

At the end of June the Princess wrote to remind the Prince of a promise he had given her the year before that she should have her daughter at Charlton. She had not, she said, claimed the fulfilment of this promise as long as he himself remained in town, but that, as he was now going away for the season, she should like the child to be sent to her instead of being left through the summer alone with her attendants at Carlton House. To this reasonable and natural

request no answer was returned, and probably the explanation is to be found in the fact that tittle-tattle had been going on, and that the Prince had been well supplied with malicious gossip founded on the Princess's heedless talk.

It would seem that Miss Hayman did not give full satisfaction to His Royal Highness—maybe she was too friendly with the Princess—and, to quote Lady Rose Weigall, “Some information of Caroline’s confidential and often imprudent gossip with the sub-governess was sure to get round to him, and probably shocked his sense of decorum; but the worst that could be said of it was that it was an amiable indiscretion, and apart from her child she had nothing but her own light nature to fall back upon.”

However this may be, the Prince never kept his promise, and the little Princess stayed on at Carlton House, paying a visit to her mother at Charlton on the Prince of Wales’s birthday, August 12. There is something so ironical in the selection of this date that the inference is that the visit was paid by “express command.” Nevertheless, the poor mother did her best to make her daughter happy, and gave a party to celebrate the occasion. Miss Hayman writes: “Princess Charlotte in her new rig, and attended by her two governesses, arrived at Charlton soon after two, and found there the Duke and Duchess of Dorset, Lord Auckland, Lady Auckland, and the Miss Edens; soon after arrived the Stadtholder and Princess of Orange, then came the Duchess of Hamilton, etc. There was a tolerable concert—Princess Charlotte dancing and amusing herself by herself for a full hour in the midst of the circle.” The Stadtholder here mentioned was the father of the Prince of Orange, who some sixteen years later was proposed as a husband for Princess Charlotte. The Stadtholder and his wife had been driven from Holland by the French, and in 1797 were living in exile in England.

At the end of three months Miss Hayman was relieved of her office of sub-governess, and the Princess took her into her service and appointed her treasurer to the household. Lady Rose Weigall remarks that from this time the intercourse between the mother and daughter was fenced round with many restrictions, which "became increasingly necessary as years went on, and the conduct of the Princess of Wales grew more and more imprudent. Even at an earlier time the position of Lady Elgin was often most painful, standing as she did between the hostile parents, and being frequently forced to assert her authority in opposition to the mother. She would not stoop to be the tool of either, but preserved an independent position towards both; kept aloof from squabbles and intrigues, and devoted herself to education and nurture of her little charge with unwearied energy and affection." Lady Elgin was assisted by Miss Gale (who succeeded Miss Hayman as sub-governess), a dresser named Mrs. Gagarin, for whom the child had a great affection, and a tutor, Mr. Trew. From all accounts the little Princess in her nursery days had a passionate but generous temper, was clever and vain, affectionate and impulsive, and certainly bore more resemblance to the Princess Caroline than to the Prince.

Though Lady Elgin was chiefly anxious for the moral training of her pupil, the child's school education was not neglected, and when she was but five years old Mr. Trew certified that "Mrs. Gagarin had taught her with so much care and attention that Her Royal Highness is now sufficiently advanced to undertake the reading and reciting of easy pieces of poetry and prose, and to begin the first rudiments of English grammar."

During this period of infantile progress Miss Hannah More paid a visit to Carlton House, and records how she spent a morning with the "prettiest, most

sensible, and genteel little creature you would wish to see." The pretty Princess took her visitor by the hand and trotted off with her through the house and garden, opening drawers, uncovering chairs, sofas, and ending with showing off her accomplishments. She repeated to the kindly old lady in the black silk hood and powdered hair "The Busy Bee" of pious Dr. Watts, danced gracefully a *pas seul*, and wound up by singing with "much spirit and precision 'God save the King'." In fact she so charmed Hannah More that the exemplary woman was moved to write her book "On the Education of a Young Princess," for which it may be surmised Charlotte in after-years did not thank her, since upon the principles laid down in this didactic volume was based the curriculum with which the little Princess, then a child of ten, had to grapple.

The notice taken of Charlotte by her uncles, and by at least one of her aunts—the Duchess of Würtemberg, once the Princess Royal of England, and now the second wife of the Duke who ill-used his first one, the Princess Caroline's sister—was in strong contrast with the neglect of the Prince of Wales. The Duchess wrote long, pious epistles to Lady Elgin on the subject of her niece's moral, religious, and scholastic welfare, and, in spite of her evident kindly regard for the child, did not hesitate to advise the "rod," which she thought "for lies or violent passions a very necessary punishment." Evidently the good Duchess forgot that corporal discipline had the contrary effect upon her brothers, all of whom had in their early youth had plenty of "stick." In the matter of chastisement, indeed, King George gave *carte blanche* to the persons charged with the education of the young Princes. The Duke of Sussex used frequently to speak of the barbarous treatment which he and the Duke of Kent experienced from their pedagogue, and it is on record that the sub-governor of the Prince of Wales and

Prince Frederick exercised his discretionary power with such brutality that his pupils rose against their tormentor, and he in turn became the floggee.

“The King,” writes the Honourable Amelia Murray in her “Recollections,” “was most anxious to train up his children in the way they should go; but severity was the fashion of the day, and, though naturally a tender and affectionate father, he placed his sons under tutors who imagined that the ‘rod’ of Scripture could only mean bodily punishment. Princess Sophia,” she adds, “once told me that she had seen her two eldest brothers, when they were boys of thirteen and fourteen, held by their arms at Buckingham Palace to be flogged like dogs with a long whip.” Judging by the results, this Spartan system of education does not seem to have been a success.

Of her brothers when grown up the Duchess was somewhat suspicious. On May 4, 1801, she wrote to Lady Elgin: “As soon as I return home I intend bespeaking a set of china at Louisbourg for Charlotte’s doll. Pray give my love to her, and tell her I am delighted to hear she is a good child. I suppose you will return to Weymouth this summer, and I hope our pretty little love will not by her uncles be drawn on to offend by boy’s play. I do not doubt that at least two or three of them will visit the King during his stay there.” As for Charlotte’s mother, it would seem that the Duchess regarded her very much as did the other daughters of Queen Charlotte. “Am I to say everything I think?” the Duchess asks on October 2, 1810. “I regret much the weakness of the mother in making a plaything of the child, and not reflecting that she is a Princess, and not an actress.” Apparently in the eyes of this prim and proper Duchess it was a sin for the poor mother to play with her little five-year-old daughter; that she was expected to repress natural human emotion, and to accept gratefully the position of an ill-used and despised woman.

## CHAPTER V

1798—1801

Princess Charlotte and Bishop Porteous—Caroline's life at Montague House—Princess Charlotte visits her mother—Sir Gilbert Elliot's advice to Caroline—Frolics at Montague House—Pitt curious to see the fun—Evil tongues at work—Dramatic meeting of the Prince and Princess of Wales—Caroline given the Ranger-ship of Greenwich Park.

AT first Caroline lived a quiet, retired life at Charlton, and the intrigues of the Prince's circle and the spite of the Queen did not trouble her. As for the little Princess, she was, if we may believe Huish, unusually precocious and unusually "good." We may accept the first, but we take leave to doubt the second. The Princess was certainly a tom-boy at eight years old, and even after she entered her teens, and it may be fairly asumed that as an infant she was something of a "pickle." Her spirits were too exuberant and her vitality too active to permit her to be anything else, and in view of her real disposition it is amusing to read the solemn testimony of the pious Dr. Porteous, Bishop of London, to her amazing goodness.

The exemplary Bishop was too pious even for King George. When on one Easter Sunday the King and Queen, after attending service at the Chapel Royal and taking the sacrament, travelled to Windsor, the worthy Bishop held up his hands in holy horror. It was not the first time the monarch, so orthodox in everything else, had outraged the proprieties in this



manner, and Dr. Porteous had on several previous occasions strongly condemned the practice. This so vexed the King that he said, "Porteous shall never be Archbishop of Canterbury"; and he never was.

The Bishop paid a visit to Princess Caroline, and recorded his experience. "Yesterday," he writes, "the 6th of August, 1801, I passed a very pleasant day at Shirley House, the residence of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. . . . We saw a good deal of the young Princess, a most captivating and engaging child, and, considering the high station she may hereafter fill, a most interesting and important one. She repeated to me several hymns with great correctness and propriety, and, on being told when she went to South End in Essex (as she afterwards did for the benefit of her health) she would be then in my diocese, she fell down on her knees and begged my blessing." This does not read like the boisterous Charlotte, but it may have been true. Children, even of five years old, were in those "good old days" crammed with what were called "religious duties," which when they were grown up they did their best to forget as speedily as possible.

Charlotte, however, had her own childish way of looking at religious matters, and that way was quaint and natural. A lady friend of the Bishop, writing from Fulham Palace, quotes a remark made by the little Princess on reading the second chapter of St. Matthew. "I think," said she, "Joseph ought not to have been afraid of returning into Judea when God told him by the angel that he might return, but," she added, with an air of relief as if the problem was too much for her to solve, "I leave that to be settled by the Bishop and Lady Elgin."

Meanwhile Caroline went on in her wilful, erratic way, indifferent to what was said about her, and never heeding the storm that was gathering. She had removed from Charlton to Montague House, Black-

heath, and here she entertained her friends. She was fond of pouring out her grievances to any one who would listen to her, and amongst those who lent a good-natured ear was Sir Gilbert Elliot, afterwards the first Earl of Minto. From Sir Gilbert's diary we get a fair idea of Caroline's life at Blackheath. Writing on June 28, 1798, he says :

“Our breakfast yesterday (with the Princess of Wales at Blackheath) proved extremely agreeable, though it was so *prudent* that I was within two of being the youngest gallant in company; my juniors were Tom Grenville and Lord Goodyear. The Princess made herself extremely agreeable, seemed delighted herself, and contrived to satisfy all her guests. . . . The Prince, however, does not see her, and the child comes only when Lady Elgin chooses; she was there yesterday, and was led about by Lady Elgin in a leading-string; though she seems stout and able to trot without help. The Princess of Wales seems to me very undeserving of such strange neglect and repudiation. Her countenance is remarkably lively and pleasing, and I think her positively a handsome woman. Nothing can be more unexceptionable than her conduct. Tables were laid in a little strip of garden under a row of trees, and providentially there was no violent rain, though it thundered all day. A slight shower which drove the white muslins for a few minutes into the house was only an incident enlivening the feast. After it there was music in the house, and I did not get away until two o'clock.”

This was in the early days, and for some time afterwards it was not all wildness and eccentricity, as the following extract shows: “The company at dinner,” Sir Gilbert writes, “was only Lord Thurlow . . . and her ladies and Mrs. and Mr. Crewe. Lord Thurlow is her principal champion and adviser. We had a pleasant family dinner in a quiet, uncourtly way. After dinner the ladies played and sang, while the

Princess entertained me mostly on the old topics on the sofa. We also played two games at chess, in which I beat her without any mercy, and told her afterwards that she saw I did not play like a courtier. There was a little supper, and we parted at twelve o'clock."

An interesting entry in the same diary is one which indicates very strikingly the affection that existed between mother and child: "Princess Charlotte was in the room till dinner, and is really one of the finest and pleasantest children I ever saw. The Princess of Wales romped with her about the carpet on her knees, as I might have done with Princess Catherine [Sir Gilbert's daughter]. Princess Charlotte, though very lively and excessively fond of romp and play, is remarkably good and governable. One day she had been a little naughty, however, and they were reprimanding her. Amongst the rest Miss Garth said to her: 'You have been so very naughty I don't know what we must do with you.' The little girl answered and quite penitent, 'You must *shoot* me'—meaning shoot her—but they let her off rather cheaper. Our dinner was pleasant as could be."

Elsewhere we have a curious piece of information relative to the Prince's views in regard to his wife. Writing towards the end of 1798 Sir Gilbert says: "The Princess of Wales tried hard to get a private word with me, but, being of the modest sex, I was so coy she could not accomplish her whole purpose, though, after all, I thought too much was done for discretion. She told me she had received, two days before, a letter from the Prince, desiring her to dine at Carlton House, and inviting her to settle there for the winter; and that she had declined. I told her she was wrong, and begged her to reflect seriously on any step she might take if similar overtures were renewed; but she said she was a very determined person when she had once formed an opinion, and that her resolution was fixed on this point; but she

knew I should think her a very wicked woman, but that I did not know and could not imagine all the circumstances; otherwise I might agree with her. . . . Prudence is totally wanting in her. When her subject engages her, her eyes and countenance speak louder than many people."

The first part of the above entry is very puzzling, and we have not been able to find elsewhere confirmation of this desire of the Prince, for what practically would have been a reconciliation—outwardly at least. Lady Charlotte Campbell has pointed out the curious tendency the Princess had at times for romancing and mystery. Was her statement to Sir Gilbert Elliot one of these lapses into the realms of fancy?

It is very clear that the overture, if it were ever made, was not renewed, and indeed Caroline's own conduct would have been a serious obstacle to anything of the kind. Sir Gilbert records that "in 1799 some more lively elements were introduced into the Society of Blackheath; and the Princess, with high spirits and no acquired prudence or discretion, allowed the tone of the society to become so lax and free that dignity, if not decorum, was placed in peril. Little games were instituted after dinner, and kept up till the small hours of the morning. Of those invited to dinner, some were made to stay to supper, and others till sandwiches appeared, which they apparently did at cockcrow. Those who cared for her became seriously distressed at the opportunities recklessly given to malignant observation. Fortunately for the Princess, the most distinguished and agreeable members of the society had her interests at heart, and were infinitely more sensitive to the dangers she incurred than she was herself. With men such as Gray, Canning, Frere, Spencer, and with such ladies as those of the North family, she was safe enough; and they confided their consternation to Mr. Pitt, who, though alarmed, was, it was surmised, a little amused, and not a little curious

to see for himself what went on. The Prime Minister had not long to wait, and a certain dinner at Blackheath in August, at which he was present, deserves to be reported.

“The Chancellor, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Douglas, and Lady Katherine Lady Charlotte North, Mrs. Crewe and Emma Crewe, George Canning, Mr. Frere, and Mr. Long, dined here last Sunday, and we *did* play at musical magic. Mr. Dundas was made by the power of harmony to kiss Miss Emma’s hand on his knees. Lady Charlotte was to present the Queen of Prussia’s bust to Mr. Pitt, and make him kiss it, which, after some difficulty, he performed. The Princess was to tie Mr. Frere and Mr. Long together and make each nurse a bolster as a baby. Mrs. Crewe, with all her caution, was the most frisky in the company, which amazed some of us much; but the most charming part of all was that of Mr. Dundas. I do not think he could be tipsy, for I sat by him at dinner, and saw no excess, but he squeezed the Princess’s hand in the tenderest manner possible, calling her angel repeatedly, and said he hoped no one but himself would know how much he loved her. What can the old thing mean? It diverts us extremely; but he is in high favour, and the Princess dines with him on Saturday to meet the Premier. He (Pitt) was charming on Sunday, and Lady Cholmondeley and Miss Garth, to whom he was beau, were captivated. When Blindman’s Buff was proposed to him (not in earnest I believe) he said, ‘I will endeavour to shut my eyes all I can, but I cannot promise the rest of the world will do the same.’ The playful manner of his saying this delighted the Princess.”

There were high jinks, doubtless, and, connected with anybody but a Princess, and one who was being constantly watched, they would not have been deemed very serious. Much excuse can be made for Caroline. Her temperament rendered her liable to fits of

depression, and with the consequent reaction came an uncontrollable desire for excitement. A fine day tempted her to gallop over to Roehampton to pay an impromptu visit to the Palmerstons', when a cricket match was being played between the servants and the gentlemen. The visit was merely an impulse, a "frisk," but one not to be repeated, simply because she and her lady-in-waiting, chancing to stay until it was late, the harmless incident became the subject of calumnious gossip. A great deal was said also about a party at Sheffield Park, when the Princess went to see the newly married Lady Sheffield (Lady Anne North before she became Lord Sheffield's wife), a new and favourite lady-in-waiting. Everything was misconstrued, yet, as told by one of the party, this is all that happened: "She was in great spirits and very happy. . . . Tom Pelham was delighted with her; she drove with Lord Sheffield in a little chaise full gallop over roads considered till then impassable, and Tom Pelham drove in a kind of tandem, which held four, in the greatest fright possible, Lady Margaret (Fordyce) groaning, Miss Vane with a face four yards long, Lady Charlotte (North) laughing, and Lady Sheffield on a little pony crying in expectation of seeing them all scattered over the road with broken arms and legs."

Charlotte inherited her mother's recklessness and high spirits, and a few years later, as will be noted, indulged in a similar escapade at the expense of Lady de Clifford, who succeeded Lady Elgin as her governess.

Subsequently Sir Gilbert throws an instructive sidelight on the treatment Caroline received from the Court—treatment which no doubt was due to Queen Charlotte's hatred of her. "Though her child," he writes, "was established in a house at Blackheath, the Princess rarely saw her alone, and expressed herself afraid to insist on so doing, lest any fault of temper or manner, afterwards detected in the child, should be

My dear Aunt

I am very happy to find  
by Lady Kingston that you are so good  
to love me so much and I assure you I  
love you very dearly for I know a great  
deal about you from Lady Elgin  
who wishes me to resemble you in  
every thing I am very anxious to  
write better that I may let you know  
how I go on in my learning I am  
very busy and I try to be very

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE'S HANDWRITING AT THE AGE OF EIGHT.

From the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.





traced to her. The Royal Family treated her with marked neglect, and the Princess had irrefragable proof that wishes of hers, simple enough to have obtained immediate gratification had they been known to the King, were purposely withheld from him—a policy which he himself described, when he became aware of it, as *much too bad*. When attending the Queen's drawing-room, the Princess was not even certain of obtaining from her husband the acknowledgment of a bow; and all this time common enemies of both made it their business to envenom the situation by retailing to each party in turn the malevolent observations they had been able to make on the conduct or expressions of the other."

A picture of the meeting of the Prince and Princess in the drawing-room has been drawn by another hand. "The Princess was there, so was the Prince. He came very near to her, which never was the case before, but did not bow, which likewise was never the case before; but His Royal Highness says she on her part did not try to catch his eye. The King spoke to the Princess about the Countess d'Almeyda, who was a new appearance at Court, and said he thought she could not be handsome as she was not fair. The Princess curtseyed, and archly said she wished others of His Majesty's family were of the same opinion. Her manner of saying it made the King laugh very much, but he said he wished so too, and thought the contrary a proof of very bad taste. She looked remarkably well."

Sir Gilbert's last allusion to this period of Caroline's residence at Blackheath, a placid time in comparison to what followed, runs thus: "Windham, Elliot and I dined at Blackheath yesterday. There was nobody else except Mrs. Fitzgerald and Miss Cholmondeley. It was very pleasant and good-humoured as usual; but she (the Princess) got me into one of the confidential whispers for the last two hours,

which always distress the patient, besides making my head ache desperately. The King is as fond of her as ever, and has at last given her the Rangership of Greenwich Park, which I am very glad of. They used to be very shabby and blackguard in refusing her half-roods of green under her windows ; now the whole is at her own disposal.”

## CHAPTER VI

1802—1806

Princess Charlotte removed from the guardianship of her mother—The King's friendship for Caroline—Differences between the King and Prince regarding the custody of the child—Mrs. Fitzherbert and Mary Seymour—The puzzle of the cartoons—Lady de Clifford appointed governess—Charlotte to be domiciled and educated at Warwick House—Her preceptors—The pompous Bishop Fisher—Charlotte's childish pranks—Her letters to Lady Albemarle—A queer story concerning Mrs. Udney—Miss Port and Princess Charlotte—The "Queen's House" now Buckingham Palace—The little Princess makes her will—Absurd resentment of the Prince—Mrs. Campbell described by Baron Stockmar.

**T**HOUGH certain restrictions at this time were placed on the intercourse between Princess Caroline and her daughter, they did not amount to positive severance, but events were happening at Blackheath destined to turn out disastrously for both mother and child.

With her appointment as Ranger of the Park came a crisis in Caroline's life. Her daughter was removed from her guardianship, nominal though this guardianship had been. The cause of this harsh step was the jealousy of the Prince on account of the friendliness shown by the King to the Princess of Wales.

Ever since the separation the Prince had been chafing concerning the custody of the Princess Charlotte, and he would have removed her from her mother

at an earlier stage but for the King, who took kindly to the lonely woman—perhaps out of remorse for the part he had played in bringing about her unhappiness—and His Royal Highness had yielded reluctantly to the arrangement that in the days of her infancy Charlotte should be under the care of the Princess Caroline. As soon, however, as he could decently do so, the Prince insisted upon having the child directly under his authority. It was very clear he wanted to wound his wife as much as possible, and no better plan for driving her to seek distraction in a way which would lay her open to criticism can be imagined than by depriving her of the care and the companionship of her little daughter.

Of these plans, however, Charlotte was far too young to know anything, and we have her writing in childish fashion to the aunt who had always taken so much interest in her education as follows :

*Letter of the Princess Charlotte to her Aunt the Electress, afterwards the Queen of Würtemberg.*

“ MY DEAR AUNT,

“ I am very happy to find by Lady Kingston that you are so good to love me so much, and I assure you I love you very dearly, for I know a great deal about you from Lady Elgin, who wishes me to resemble you in everything. I am very anxious to write that I may let you know how I am getting on in my learning. I am very busy and I try to be very good. I hope to go to Windsor soon, and see my dear Grandpapa and Grandmamma. I love very much to go there and play. Mamma comes very often to see me, and then we play at all merry games Colin Mailliard (Blind Man’s Buff). I am much obliged to you for sending me so many pretty things, and wish you and the Elector were here and would bring my cousin the

Princess Theresa with you. Adieu, my dear Aunt,  
and believe me,

“Your ever affectionate and dutiful niece,  
“CHARLOTTE.

“P.S. My Duty to the Elector.

“SHREWSBURY LODGE,  
“August 17, 1804.”

Charlotte was eight years old when she wrote the above, and her handwriting, of which we give a specimen on page 87, was by no means below the average of that of children of her own age.

On Christmas day Charlotte was at Carlton House, and Lady Elizabeth Foster, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire, writes that “she played on the pianoforte to the Prince.” Changes in regard to the guardianship of the child were in progress, and Lady Dorothy adds: “The King wants her given up to him. The Prince does not consent to that. He appoints as nearly as he can all the persons the King would have nominated about the little Princess.

The Prince had by great efforts got rid of Lady Jersey, but a new star was rising in spite of his attachment to Mrs. Fitzherbert—his “only true and real wife,” his “beloved and adored Maria Fitzherbert”—in the person of the stately and fascinating Marchioness of Hertford. The obstacle to his complete pleasure was Caroline, and nothing would have pleased him better than for her to commit some indiscretion which would enable him to sever the marriage tie. The beautiful Marchioness was by no means disposed to play the rôle of a Lady Jersey, and her coldness sent the foolish amorous Prince into a maudlin condition. “When he was first in love with Lady Hertford,” Creevey records, “I have seen the tears run down his cheeks at dinner, and he has been dumb for hours.”

Charlotte was removed to a separate establishment, as the first step towards separating her from her mother, and Shrewsbury Lodge, near Blackheath, was accordingly taken for her residence, as the letter of the child already quoted shows.

But this plan was not at first proposed. A few months previous to the appointment of Lady de Clifford as the little Princess's governess the Prince of Wales offered, through Lord Moira, to consign his daughter entirely to the care of her grandfather. The King eagerly accepted the proposal, and gave orders for the Lower Lodge, Windsor, to be prepared for her reception. As the time drew nigh, however, the Prince changed his mind, alleging as a reason for withdrawing from his proposal that it was made "before he had seen the King at Windsor"—a brutal insinuation, as Lord Albemarle called it, that his royal father had, in the interval, been afflicted with insanity, and therefore was unfit for so important a charge. On the other hand the King was determined to keep his son to his engagement, and communicated his intention to the Prince, through Lord Eldon, in the following letter, dated March 1, 1805: "The preparations for establishing the Princess Charlotte at Windsor are in such forwardness that the King can authorise the Lord Chancellor to acquaint the Prince of Wales that the apartments will be completely ready for her reception in two weeks, and that he shall then give notice to Lady de Clifford for her removal to that place."

The evident intention to interfere, and the employment of the Lord Chancellor, whom the Prince disliked, irritated the latter beyond measure. He wrote to Lady de Clifford the same evening he received his father's letter, telling her that she was the medium, "and must ever be the properest medium through which her [his daughter's] wishes and inclinations must be conveyed." Then followed a "memorandum for Lady de Clifford from the Prince of Wales,"

intended to "apprise" her and Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Exeter, who had been appointed preceptor to the Princess Charlotte, "of the present state of the business, and to serve as a guide for them in such conversations as His Majesty may honour them on this subject."

In this memorandum there is no direct reference to the Princess Caroline, but the following passage clearly points to her: "The Prince could on no account agree to the interference of any other person *whatever except His Majesty* . . . and this point must at all times be considered as the indispensable condition of the Prince's consent to any arrangement present or future." Here, it will be seen, is the key to the Prince's objection to Charlotte being under the guardianship of the King. He knew uncle and niece were friendly; he feared that Caroline would have ready access to her daughter, and this he wished to prevent at all costs.

The memorandum added fuel to the fire. The King, in reply, wrote curtly to Lord Eldon: "His Majesty must either have the whole care and superintendence of the person and education of the Princess or entirely decline any interference or expense." This settled the matter; the Prince had his way, and the result was a bitter enmity between father and son, which never quite died out. Throughout the lamentable business the Prince's conduct was as bad as it could be. "It is more than a father can bear," cried the King subsequently, and it is not to be wondered at that the expression was wrung from the poor old man, for when he went to see his niece at Montague House the Prince pretended to misconstrue his motives in the worst sense! The only retaliation the King permitted himself was to write a letter to Lord Eldon, which he knew his son would see. In this letter he said: "It is quite charming to see the Princess and her child together, of which I have been since yesterday a witness." George was well aware

that nothing would gall his son more than the fact that mother and daughter had met and had exchanged love and embraces.

Gradually the friction between father and son subsided, but they were never friendly again, and the mental breakdown of the King, which happened soon after, put an end to all further intercourse. The young Princess now passed her time partly at Windsor and partly in London, where she was domiciled at Warwick House, which was so near Carlton House that the Prince forbade his wife visiting her daughter here, as he regarded such a visit as equivalent to coming to Carlton House itself!

In the spring of 1805 Mrs. Fitzherbert and her affairs suddenly leaped into prominence, and for some little time nothing was talked about but the legal proceedings taken by Lord Henry Seymour against Mrs. Fitzherbert to obtain the custody and guardianship of his niece Mary Seymour, a child of much the same age as Charlotte. The matter was made more important from a public point of view than the real facts warranted, because of the rumours which were afloat, and also because of the strong personal interest the Prince took in the affair from first to last.

The story, divested of the gossip surrounding it, is a very simple one. One of Mrs. Fitzherbert's dearest friends, Lady Horatia Seymour, the wife of Lord Hugh Seymour, the fifth son of the first Marquis of Hertford, being in the last stage of consumption, was advised to go abroad, and before leaving England she placed her youngest child in the care of Mrs. Fitzherbert, who, having no child of her own, became deeply attached to the little girl. Lady Horatia Seymour returned to England in 1801, the child then being three years old, and stayed in London a month, and during that time she had an interview with the Prince of Wales. The Prince made an affidavit during the progress of the litigation four years afterwards,





The GUARDIAN ANGEL.

From a cartoon by Gillray.



from which it appears that at that interview Lady Horatia told him "*she would not be so unfeeling as to take it [the child] from her*" (Mrs. Fitzherbert), adding, "*The child knows no other mother than her, and that she had directed her to do with it as her own.*" Lady Horatia observed that Mrs. Fitzherbert must be more attached to the child than she could be, having herself hardly ever seen her, while Mrs. Fitzherbert had had her almost constantly from her birth; remarking at the same time that she could hardly have believed from the state of health she was in at the time of her lying-in that she could have borne so fine an infant. She thanked the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert for the kindness they had shown the little girl, and continued: "I have something more, Prince of Wales, to say to you; recollect that it is the last request of a dying mother, and that is that you will take an oath and swear to me most solemnly that you will be the father and protector through life of this dear child." The Prince gave his promise, and Lady Horatia shortly after left London for Bristol, where she died in July, 1801. Her husband, Lord Hugh Seymour, died in Jamaica three months later, and before the news of his wife's death reached him; and in his will he appointed the Earl of Euston and his brother, Lord Henry Seymour, as his executors, and as the guardians of his children, whom he mentioned by name, with the exception of Mary, who was not born when the will was made.

The executors consented to allow the little girl to remain with Mrs. Fitzherbert until June, 1803, but before this time expired the Prince offered to settle £10,000 upon her if she were permitted to live with Mrs. Fitzherbert. To this the executors would not agree. Mrs. Fitzherbert appealed to the law and, on the advice of Romilly, refused to give up the child.

The matter dragged slowly on, and in February, 1805, the Master in Chancery reported in favour of

the executors, on which Mrs. Fitzherbert brought the case before the Lord Chancellor, only to be beaten again. Then an appeal was made to the House of Lords, and as the day for the hearing approached, public excitement increased. A good deal of personal feeling had been introduced into the matter on account of Mrs. Fitzherbert being a Catholic, and one of the points set up by the executors was that her religion "constituted a positive and unsurmountable objection to her." Apart from this Lady Waldegrave, one of Lady Henry Seymour's sisters, took an attitude of pronounced hostility towards Mrs. Fitzherbert, and this led to much bitterness. At the eleventh hour, however, a compromise was arrived at, through the intervention of Lord Hertford, the head of the Seymour family, and in the House of Lords, which was crowded in every part, he announced to the assembled peers his willingness to undertake the charge of his niece on the express understanding that he should be unfettered. Their lordships were only too glad to agree. Lord Chancellor Erskine reversed the decision of his predecessor (in the interval there had been a change of Government), and immediately the matter was settled. Lord Hertford requested Mrs. Fitzherbert to act as his deputy, and so the lady won the day.

The Princess Charlotte was in no way concerned in the matter, but the air was full of gossip, intrigue, and scandal, and it is asserted that the public, not knowing the truth, chose to assume that it was she who was the cause of the trouble. Feeling ran high against the Catholics. Mrs. Fitzherbert was disliked on account of her religion, and the story was in circulation that she was trying to induce the Prince to bring up the young Princess in the Catholic faith. The two cartoons published in 1805, which are reproduced in these pages, have been instanced as evidence of this, but we are inclined to think that the evidence is not entirely conclusive; certainly the authorities who

have commented on the matter have left it more confused than they found it.

Wright and Evans, in a note to "The Guardian Angel" ("Historical Account of Gillray's Works"), remark: "This parody on the Rev. Peters' picture is said to have been intended as a satire on a rumoured attempt of Mrs. Fitzherbert to convert the Princess Charlotte to the Catholic faith." Mr. John Ashton, in "Prince Florizel's Folly," gives a different interpretation. He says: "The print is taken from the Rev. W. Peters' sublime idea of an angel conducting the soul of a child to Heaven. Mrs. Fitzherbert, with apron full of 'playthings,' such as rosaries, monstrances, thuribles, service books, is an angel who is ascending from the Pavilion at Brighton with Miss Seymour in her arms." This explanation seems more reasonable than Wright's, but in describing "To be or not to be—a Protestant" Mr. Ashton is surely in error in assigning the mature lady on the sofa to Mary Seymour—a child of eight years old!—and it is curious to find Mr. W. H. Wilkins, in "Mrs. Fitzherbert and George IV.," reproducing Ashton's description without question.

The puzzle is to fix the personality of the lady on the sofa. She certainly bears a resemblance to Caroline, and the Prince of Wales's plume in her head-dress supports the supposition that she is intended to represent the Princess. If not, the only lady possible is Lady Waldegrave, but she did not come into the public view, and would hardly be recognised. Supposing Caroline were meant, it is quite feasible that the picture on the wall portrays the Princess Charlotte and not Mary Seymour. Perhaps the cartoonist intended to convey the suggestion that Caroline should imitate Mrs. Fitzherbert. The latter's phrase, "I say I have the undoubted right to have the care of her [the child in the picture], and to bring her up as I like," are certainly applicable to the Princess; but the question, "Do I not rule the roost?"

has more point coming from Mrs. Fitzherbert's lips than from Caroline's.

The easiest solution of the question is that the cartoons were intended to represent public opinion concerning Princess Charlotte, and that the Seymour controversy was made use of for this purpose. There is no doubt the public found a difficulty in deciding the exact position of Mrs. Fitzherbert with regard to Princess Charlotte, or the extraordinary *faux pas* at Cheltenham in 1812, when Mrs. Fitzherbert chanced to be there, would never have been perpetrated. The story goes, according to Mr. W. H. Wilkins, that a public entertainment was given in honour of the Princess Charlotte's birthday, to which Mrs. Fitzherbert was invited. The *gauche* Colonel who acted as master of the ceremonies led her in to supper before all the other ladies present. He later made a speech, in which he alluded to her as "the Regentess," and, in order to make things pleasant all round, he proceeded to praise the Regent, his consort the Princess of Wales, and the Princess Charlotte, whom he described as "the lovely fruit of their union." The blunder was emphasised by the fact that at this time the separation between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert was complete and final.

In the meantime preparations for the education of the Princess were made on a most elaborate scale, and could the child have realised what they meant it would have added to the grief she felt at being parted from her mother. Subordinate to her governess, Lady de Clifford, were two under-governesses, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Udney. Charlotte became very fond of Mrs. Campbell, but never overcame her dislike of Mrs. Udney, though the latter has been represented as a mild, harmless person. The Bishop of Exeter, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, was, as already mentioned, her preceptor, and the Rev. George Nott was appointed chaplain and sub-preceptor.

Lady de Clifford was in many respects a remarkable woman. She had passed much of her time abroad, and had been acquainted with many of the notabilities of the Court of Louis XVI. Until age impaired her faculties she was, it is said, full of anecdote and a very agreeable companion. No doubt she had a temper, but she and her charge seem to have got on very well together, despite their constant quarrels. Lady de Clifford's grandson, Lord Albemarle, in his pleasant "Reminiscences," says: "The Princess used frequently to complain to me of her governess's harsh treatment of her, but Her Royal Highness, in her cooler moments, would say, 'After all, there are many worse persons in the world than your snuffy old grandmother.'" And probably Lady de Clifford had much the same opinion of the young Princess, who at times must have been what is known as a "handful."

Dr. Fisher appears to have been a most unsuitable person for his post. Lord Albemarle, who was about the same age as the Princess and was her playmate on many occasions, describes him as "a dull, solemn man with a severe expression of countenance, to which a projecting underlip contributed not a little. He was a good classical scholar, but had no more knowledge of mankind than was to be acquired in the quadrangle of a college, where he had passed the greater part of his life. He was precise in dress and formal in manner. In language he was a thorough pedant, seeming to consider the force of words to be in proportion to the number of syllables they contained."

One can imagine how a sharp-witted, lively child must have regarded her dominie. As a matter of fact, he was very distasteful to her; indeed, there were few persons whom she regarded with more aversion than the "great U. P.," as she nicknamed him from the affected emphasis he used to lay on the last syllable

of the word "Bishop." The story goes that the Princess once pulled off the Bishop's wig and threw it in the fire. Lord Albemarle, who records this story but cannot vouch for its truth, says that "frequently, when the Bishop's back was turned, she would imitate his voice and gesture, and, shooting forth her nether lip, would give a sample of those grandiloquent homilies which he was in the habit of inflicting upon her in season and out of season. His lordship must have been an intolerable bore, and small blame to the young Princess that she had her revenge in her own childish way." In another mood she was obedient and gracious, as when on two of her uncles giving her a snuff-box, and in joke making her take a pinch, and the Bishop reproving her, she turned to him, looked up in his face, and tossed the snuff into the fire.

Like most bishops at that time, Dr. Fisher was an ultra Tory, but the Princess, young as she was, would have nothing to do with his lordship's politics. There are not wanting signs that if Charlotte had been spared she would have been a most ardent politician, and that her sympathies would not have been with those who believe in "the right divine of kings to govern wrong."

The Bishop, in addition to being a bore, was also a busybody and a meddler. The dislike with which the Princess regarded him was fully shared by her governess. From the moment that he was installed in his office he began to encroach upon Lady de Clifford's duties, even in matters which come exclusively within a woman's department. This interference Lady de Clifford always believed to have been with the secret connivance of the King, who, in placing him about his granddaughter's person, appears to have had the same object in view as when he appointed Mrs. Campbell as a counterpoise to Mrs. Udney. The conduct of Dr. Fisher was a source of great annoyance to the Prince, who employed his brother, the Duke of Kent, of whom the Bishop had formerly



been preceptor, to remonstrate with him and to entreat him to confine himself for the future to the duties of his own particular province. But the remonstrance had no effect. The war with Lady de Clifford went on, and hostilities only ceased between them on the lady's retirement from office.

The Bishop's daughter, one is thankful to learn, did not take after her ponderous father. Charlotte found in her quite a kindred spirit. They were about the same age, and their favourite exercise was leap-frog, in which their playmates joined. Away went all dignity, and one can well imagine the little Princess exclaiming, as indeed she did, "Pray don't call me your Royal Highness." The title certainly did not consort well with leap-frog.

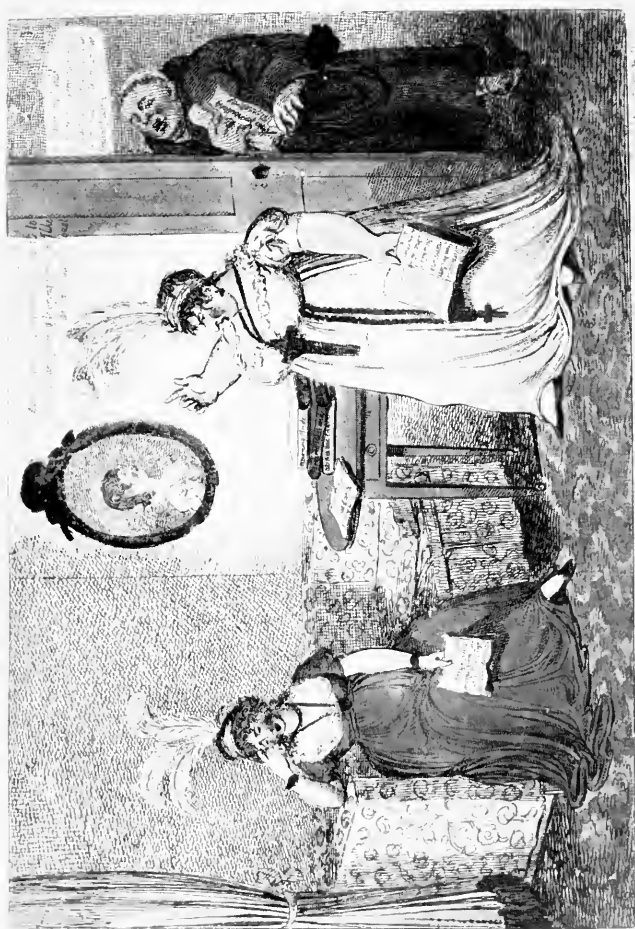
According to Huish, Charlotte was a most diligent and exemplary scholar. An edition of Blackstone's "Commentaries" was dedicated to her out of compliment to her erudition—a piece of absurdity, considering she was but ten years old. She is represented at this time to have spoken of the Ossian poems in enthusiastic terms, and could repeat nearly the whole of Pope's "Essay on Man" without a book. She also "spoke French, German, Italian, and Spanish, with considerable fluency, and was, in addition, an excellent musician, playing on the harp, piano, and guitar with much skill." Altogether Huish represents her as being a most accomplished young person, and the reports of her prodigious learning must have brought the blush of pleasure to the virgin cheeks of the pious and pragmatist Miss Hannah More, who probably attributed the girl's alleged proficiency to her tedious essay on "The Education of a Princess."

Huish gives an example of the Princess's talk which one may be certain was more like that of her biographer than of herself. Being asked how she would have acted in the case of Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex, she answered, "I should perhaps have acted

like Elizabeth ; I should have forgotten the Queen and acted the woman." We may be pretty sure the lively Charlotte never said anything of the kind ; and as for accomplishments, she had none, for the fact was Charlotte was very indifferently educated. "With an alienated father and with a mother who had not a vestige of power," remarks Lady Rose Weigall, of this time, "the education of the child had languished since the period when Mr. Trew gave his certificate of her progress." Charlotte's spelling certainly was always very shaky, and in subsequent years she did not show signs of careful tuition in other respects. The Mr. Trew mentioned was in charge of the child's education up to the time when Lady Elgin was superseded.

In 1813, when Charlotte was seventeen years old, she commenced a correspondence with one of her friends, and her letters bear testimony to her neglected education. The handwriting is a nearly illegible scrawl, the grammar is constantly at fault, and the style stilted and pompous after the fashion of the novels of the time. What Huish says about her childish frolics is likely to be true. It is pleasant to hear of her at Bognor, tripping down to "Robinson's the baker's, about the time when she knew his buns were ready," and of her driving Lady de Clifford in a chaise drawn by grey ponies across a field full of knolls and ruts "with uncommon speed, to the great annoyance and terror of the old lady."

Meanwhile Caroline was a source of constant anxiety and annoyance to her friends. Often when, in obedience to the King's commands, Lady de Clifford took her young charge to see her mother, the Princess of Wales would behave "with a levity of manner and language that the presence of her child was insufficient to restrain," and once Lady de Clifford was obliged to threaten her with making such a representation to the King as would tend to deprive her altogether of the



THE SPECTATOR. — To Be or Not to Be a Protestant.

From a cartoon by Gillray.



young Princess's society. It is only fair to say that these remonstrances were always taken in good part, and produced promises of amendment—a proof that Lady de Clifford discharged her onerous duties with great discretion and tact.

Many of Charlotte's letters written at this period have been preserved, and they are thoroughly naïve and unaffected. Here is one to Lady Albemarle :

“ I am very much obliged to you for sending me the game. But I must tell you about the dog. I am quite obliged to you for giving me a . . . [*illegible*] . . . but I [would] rather have a pug. Pray have the goodness to tell me how old the pug is. Pray give it a name, and tell me if it is a female or not. I must add that you have no idea how good and kind dearest [*name illegible*] is. I knew you would like him, he is so very kind to me that I cannot do to [too] much for him. I must tell you that I beg you will forgive me if I do come back to the subject of Mrs. Udney. I assure you I do not like her at all. Pray do not tell. Besides, there is not a day but there is something that happens. She does not pass over little faults. I think that that is not kind, but I leave that to you. I do assure you that I like Mrs. Cample [*Campbell*] better. She is a very good woman.

“ Pray how is Mrs. Durham ? I hope she is well. Mrs. Udney begs to be remembered to her, and to you, and to Lord A., and to all the children. I would add that myself, as it makes you laugh.

“ I owe a great deal to Lady De Clifford and Mr. Nott. Remember me to all the children and Lord A.

“ Pray right [*sic*] to me soon, and right a long letter, and pray send my dog soon.

“ Excuse this scrawl for I am in a great hurry, and have a bad headache. Mr. [*name illegible*] I hope is [was] well when you saw him. I have not told your

mother (lady de Clifford) your secret. Your writing in the last letter was dreadful.”

Charlotte's was not much better, and her spelling was worse. To judge from many of her letters, orthography does not appear to have been included in Miss Hannah More's scheme for the education of a young Princess. The following, also to Lady Albemarle, is an instance :

“ Having heard that your finger was bad, I could not help writing these few lines to inquire after your poor finger. If you will take my advice, you will put some Frier's Barlsom to it, and that will heal it very soon. You must not move your finger for a couple of days.

“ Poor Mrs. Udney is very unwell, and confined to her room ; but I hope she will soon be better. She sends her love to you. Pray tell me how Lady Sophia goes on with her drawing. Give my love to them all, especially to my dear little G—daughter, who, I hope, is well. Believe me to be, Your ever affectionate, Charlotte. I have seen Papa, who has been very ill . . . which has pulled him down a good deal, and has made him very pail [*sic*]. Charles, I hope, is well.”

A curious piece of gossip relative to the Mrs. Udney whom Charlotte disliked so much is to be found in the “Glenbervie Journals,” which Mr. Walter Sichel was so fortunate to light upon. Lord Glenbervie (Lady Glenbervie was lady-in-waiting in 1815 to the Princess of Wales), after a chat with Lady Harcourt, writes : “ She [Lady Harcourt] says Mrs. Udney had an intrigue with one of the Princess Charlotte's music or drawing masters—that they used to be locked up together in Mrs. Udney's room, which opened into the Princess's, and that when any friend or intimate came there,

and was going to open the door of communication, the Princess would say: "You must not try to go there. Mrs. Udney and — are there, and they always lock themselves in." May one venture to ask, is the reason of Charlotte's hostile attitude towards the under-governess to be found in this morsel of scandal? It may account for the scoldings the child was favoured with.

The beautiful Miss Port, afterwards Baroness Bunsen and great-niece of Mrs. Delany, the vivacious chronicler of gossip of the later part of the eighteenth century, describes amusingly a visit to Buckingham House at this time, where she saw the little Princess. "Yesterday," she writes on June 5, 1805, "the Princesses, and afterwards the Queen, sent for mamma, my sisters, and me. We came into a very little room which the Princesses and their hoops exclusively occupied. I was engaged in admiring Princess Mary's headdress, which was a large plume of white ostrich feathers and a very small plume of black feathers placed before the white ones, her hair drawn up quite smooth to the top of her head, with one large curl hanging from thence almost down to her throat. Princess Elizabeth had eleven immense yellow ostrich feathers on her head, which you may imagine had not a very good effect. We had been in the room five minutes when Princess Charlotte of Wales came in, dressed in a pale pink frock covered with lace, and wearing a beautiful pearl necklace and brilliants, and a diamond cross. She is a very pretty and delicate-looking child, and has light brown hair which curls all over her head . . . has the manner of a little queen, though she is as natural as possible."

Buckingham House at this period could hardly be called a fitting residence for a monarch, but its homeliness had its attractions for George III., who in 1760 bought it for the sum of £21,000. Here all his numerous family were born, with the exception of

the Prince of Wales, whose birth took place at St. James's Palace. The King and Queen became so fond of their purchase that they took up their abode permanently here, and St. James's was kept up for use only on Court days and other occasions of ceremony. In 1775 the property was legally settled on Queen Charlotte in exchange for Somerset House, and henceforth Buckingham House was known in West-End society as the "Queen's House."

Buckingham House has been described as "dull, dowdy, and decent; nothing more than a large, substantial, and respectable-looking red-brick house"; and what Northouck has to say of it justifies the description. "In the front," he says, "it is enclosed with a semicircular sweep of iron rails which are altered very unhappily from the rails which enclosed it before it became a royal residence. Formerly an elegant pair of gates opened in the middle; but now, though a foot-opening leads to where an opening naturally is expected in front, all entrance is forbidden by the rails being oddly continued across without affording an avenue through. The edifice is a mixture of brick and stone with a broad flight of steps leading up to the door, which is between four tall Corinthian pilasters, which are fluted and reach up to the top of the second storey." In 1808 the King gave a reception to the French Ambassador, when an honour was conferred upon him that was hitherto confined to the Royal Family, namely, "the great iron gates fronting the park were thrown open for his entrance." The house contained some spacious rooms, but was ill-arranged and was in a bad state of repair at that time. In 1813, when the King's insanity was pronounced incurable, he was confined to his apartments in Buckingham House, and the occupants of Grosvenor Place could see him as he took in the grounds the daily exercise prescribed for him by his physicians.

The little Princess's naturalness was delightful, but



it was not understood in the least by the Prince of Wales. On one occasion she saw Mrs. Campbell, the sub-governess, writing very intently, and asked her what she was doing. "I am making my will," was the reply. "Then I'll make mine too," said she, and, running for paper and pencil, she went to work, giving expression to her likes and dislikes in characteristic fashion in the following document :

"I make my will.

"First, I leave all my best books, and all my books, to the Rev. Mr. Nott.

"Secondly, to Mrs. Campbell my three watches and half my jewels.

"Thirdly, I beg Mr. Nott, whatever money he finds me in possession of, to distribute to the poor, and I leave with Mr. Nott all my papers which he knows of. I beg the prayer-book which Lady Elgin gave me may be given to the Bishop of Exeter, and that the Bible Lady Elgin gave me may be given to him also. Also my playthings the Miss Fishers are to have; and lastly, concerning Mrs. Gagarin and Mrs. Lewis I beg they may be very handsomely paid, and that they may have a house. Lady de Clifford the rest of my jewels, except those that are most valuable, and these my father and mother, the Prince and Princess of Wales, are to take.

"Nothing to Mrs. Udney, for reasons.

"I have done my will, and trust that after I am dead a great deal may be done for Mr. Nott. I hope the King will make him a Bishop.

"CHARLOTTE.

"*March, 1806.*

"My birds to Mrs. Gagarin and my dog or dogs to Mrs. Anne Hutton my chambermaid."

It will hardly be believed that this purely childish freak was taken seriously by the Prince and led to the

most unexpected consequences. The only reasonable explanation of His Royal Highness's absurd attitude is that at the time his mind was unhinged, possibly by drink. The blame of Charlotte's whimsical production was thrown upon Mrs. Campbell, who was so much distressed that she sent in her resignation. The following extract from the Journal of Lady Susan O'Brien, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, the members of whose family were great friends of Mrs. Campbell, pretty well expresses what people outside the Prince's circle thought of the silly affair: "While I was in town, I was informed of a curious transaction going on at Carlton House, on account of a childish will the Princess Charlotte had made, in which she left half her jewels to Lady de Clifford, half to Mrs. Campbell, and all her valuable jewels to her papa and mamma. They supposed Mrs. Campbell concerned in making it, and told the Bishop of it, who smiled. The Prince was displeased, and said it was 'high treason,' and called Mr. Adam, Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall, who answered, 'Your Royal Highness has taken a just view of the matter.' All this nonsense has been before the Privy Council, whose time might be better employed."

The matter, however, was kept a secret so far as Princess Charlotte was concerned, as a letter written by her to Lady Albemarle at this date indicates: "I am much obliged to you for your very kind letter. Poor dear Mrs. Campbell is going away, for her health is so bad. If you have any regard to me, you will write to her and try to console her. Do if you love me. I lose a great deal when she leaves me. Indeed she is a charming woman, that is far above Mrs. Udney, for the more I see of Mrs. Campbell, the more I love [her], but Mrs. Udney I still continue to dislike. When you come to town I wish to have a conversation with you about her. Do not be angry with me; if you knew Mrs. C. you would quite adore

her. She is so charming a woman. She tells me my faults, and, in short, is above flattery. Let me hear in your next letter that you love her. Do say so, or that you have a regard for her. You have no idea how unhappy I am. I can scarcely wright to you. I loved her dearly. Pray do not be angry with me."

The sequel to Mrs. Campbell's story is told by Lord Albemarle. He says: "After the celebrated flight of Princess Charlotte in 1814 from Warwick House to her mother's residence in Connaught Place, the Prince of Wales resolved to make a clean sweep of his daughter's household. In forming a new establishment for her, his first care was to engage the services of Mrs. Campbell, the lady whom a few years before he had denounced before the Privy Council as guilty of 'high treason.' How, it might be asked, came he to think of intrusting a person so accused with so important a charge? The answer is an easy one. Mrs. Campbell . . . was a Tory. When the Princess made her 'will,' the Prince, in fierce opposition to the King his father, was a leader of the Whig faction. But at the time of the Princess's flight he had himself become 'in all but name a king.' The change of circumstances had wrought a corresponding change of opinions: His Royal Highness had come round to Mrs. Campbell's way of thinking. Hence it was in his eyes the traitress of 1806 was a most loyal subject in 1814, and as such well qualified to hold a confidential post about his daughter's person." It was not until after much personal solicitation on the part of the Regent that Mrs. Campbell consented to become a second time a member of the Princess's household. On the marriage of the Princess with Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, Mrs. Campbell became Keeper of her Privy Purse, and what she was like Stockmar lets us know in one of his clever character-sketches.

"Mrs. Campbell, Lady in Waiting to the Princess,"

the Baron writes, "is a small, thin woman of forty-five, a widow, sharp and angular in every feature and movement, pretentious, because she too was once young and handsome, and because she has a good understanding; and yet not unbearably pretentious just because she is really sensible. Extremely well informed, and thoroughly upright, she conducts the correspondence of the Princess and manages her accounts with the greatest ease and to her entire satisfaction. Amongst us, she opposes everything she sees and hears, and meets everything that men can say and do with such consistent contradiction, that we can tell beforehand with certainty what will be her answers to our questions. She is so thoroughly possessed by this spirit of opposition that it is impossible for her to be true to any party; and she is now of the Court, now of the Ministerial, now of the Opposition, now of the Popular party, according to her opponent. As a rule, she is without mercy, and her conversation is therefore sharp and biting. But she has occasionally her humane days, in which she is pleased, in fact disarmed—that is, when her arrows have hit and wounded. One gains some insight into such a singular character when one knows that she has had bitter experiences with men, and that in an illness during a seven months' sea-voyage she was kept alive only on brandy and water. This lady is now our only lawful female society, and we therefore treat her as the representative of the whole sex, with a half free, half enforced respect."

## CHAPTER VII

1806—1807

The Princess Caroline's fondness for children leads to embarrassing results—The mystery of "Willikin"—Caroline's disastrous acquaintanceship with Lady Douglas—Lady Douglas spreads slanderous reports out of revenge—Rumours affecting the Princess reach the King—A Royal Commission of Inquiry appointed—Secret proceedings—The Princess declared to be innocent, but her conduct is censured by the King—Caroline's threatened retaliation stopped by Perceval—Princess Charlotte at the Royal birthday party—The last meeting of the Prince and Princess of Wales—Caroline's curious reminiscences.

MEANWHILE the conduct of the Princess of Wales was causing the greatest anxiety to her friends. The hostility of the Prince, his harshness in depriving her of the society of her child, save at certain stated intervals, and the cold treatment she received from the Queen and her daughters, told upon her mind, and the effect was seen in her subsequent actions. Up to the summer of 1804, when the new arrangements were made for the education of Charlotte, the King was her staunch friend. Her injuries, he told Lord Eldon, "deserve the utmost attention of the King, as her own conduct has proved irreproachable." But after this time loneliness began to tell upon the unhappy woman, and her heedlessness was destined to place her in a terribly false position.

The persistent fancy Caroline had for taking notice of infants has already been alluded to. This fancy never left her, and probably when she was deprived of the companionship of her little daughter

she was less able than ever to resist it. The Princess made no secret of what really amounted to a craze. Years after the Blackheath episodes of 1804-5, Lady Charlotte Campbell wrote in her diary :

“The Princess was in the way of saying jocularly, ‘I have nine children.’ And, when her hearers laughed at the joke as such, she would say, ‘It is true, upon honour ; dat is to say, I take care of eight boys and one girl. De boys shall serve de King. My good friend, Sir J. B., will take of some. The girl I took by a very romantic accident. In the time of the disturbances in Ireland, a man and woman, apparently of the better class, left a female infant with a poor old peasant woman, who lives at Blackheath, and with the infant, a sum of money sufficient to support it a certain time. But the time elapsed, the money was spent, and no one came to supply the old woman with means for the babe’s future exigencies. So she came to me, and told her story, and asked what she should do. At first I thought of putting the child to the parish ; but somehow I could not bear that ; so it ended in my taking charge of the infant entirely at my own expense. She is now at school at Bath, under the care of a Mrs. Twiss, sister of Mrs. Siddons. I have not seen the child for five years, and do not mean to see her till she is grown up : she is now twelve years old.”

There was no harm and no mystery in this, but it was very different with the strange story of “Willikin.” The child’s real name was William Austin, and he was said to be the son of a Deptford dockyard labourer. He was but a baby when he was brought to Montague House, Blackheath, where he was reared, and was always with the Princess, even when he reached man’s estate. Nothing can excuse Caroline’s indiscretion in gratuitously making herself the subject of scandal, save the weakness of brain which her relatives believed was her calamity. Dr. Doran suggests that “it may

perhaps be accounted for by the fact that she knew she was narrowly watched by enemies who felt an interest in accomplishing her ruin, and she was elated with the idea of mystifying them by the presence of an infant at Montague House." Whether this was so or that she yielded to uncontrollable impulses is of no importance. Her enemies were not concerned to inquire into her motives ; they were only too ready to twist her every action into a semblance of wrongdoing, and the presence of Willikin, and the notice which the Princess took of him, were quite sufficient for their purpose. But they were crafty, and the scandal was a long time in coming to a head.

In an evil hour the Princess made the acquaintance of Sir John and Lady Douglas, who had taken up their residence in the neighbourhood of Montague House, and from this acquaintance sprang the most disastrous consequences. Lady Douglas was a lady whose reputation was not without blemish, while her origin was nothing to be proud of, her father being a private soldier and her mother the illegitimate daughter of a Bath attorney. Caroline, according to Lady Douglas, introduced herself without any ceremony, and in her "Narrative of Certain Transactions which took place at Montague House," Lady Douglas tells the story :

"As I was sitting in my parlour, which commanded a view of the heath, I saw to my surprise the Princess of Wales, elegantly dressed in a lilac satin pelisse, primrose-coloured half boots, and a small lilac travelling cap, faced with sable, and a lady, pacing up and down before the house, and sometimes stopping, as if desirous of opening the gate in the iron railing to come in. At first I had no conception Her Royal Highness really wished to come in, but must have mistaken the house for another person's, for I had never been made known to her. I did not know that she knew where I lived. I stood at the window

looking at her, and as she looked, very much from respect, curtsied (as I understood was customary) : to my astonishment she returned my curtesy by a familiar nod, and stopped. Old Lady Stuart, who was in the room, said, 'You should go out ; Her Royal Highness wants to come in out of the snow.' Upon this I went out, and she came immediately to me and said, 'I believe you are Lady Douglas, and you have a very beautiful child ; I should like to see it.' I answered that I was Lady Douglas. Her Royal Highness then said, 'I should like of all things to see your little child.' I answered that I was very sorry I could not have the honour of presenting my little girl to her, as I and my family were spending the cold weather in town, and I was only come to spend an hour or two upon the heath. I held open the gate, and the Princess of Wales and her lady, Miss Hayman, I believe, walked in and stayed about an hour, laughing very much at Lady Stuart, who, being a singular character, talked all kind of nonsense."

The acquaintance ripened ; Lady Douglas was invited to Montague House, and the intimacy went on until the Douglasses left Blackheath. This was during the Christmas of 1803, and a year went over before the two again met. In the meantime certain rumours of scandalous stories, set on foot by Lady Douglas, had reached the Princess, and when Lady Douglas wanted to renew the acquaintance a formal note was sent to her, requesting her to discontinue her visits. The Princess could do no less, for it was said that Lady Douglas had spread the report that Her Royal Highness had been delivered of a child. Lady Douglas sent to the Princess a letter of denial, but this was returned unopened.

Some short time before the boy "Willikin" had been introduced into the Princess's house, and Lady Douglas, burning for revenge, made the most of the fact. It was easy for a malicious tongue to make



scandalous suggestions, especially as Caroline's flighty conduct had already laid her open to remark, and Lady Douglas communicated with the Duke of Sussex on the subject. Eventually the matter came before the Prince of Wales, and the latter, overjoyed at the opportunity for which he had been waiting so long, eagerly accepted Lady Douglas's slanderous statements. An impartial examination would have revealed damaging discrepancies, but His Royal Highness was not anxious for impartiality; he wanted a substantial charge against his wife, and here was the very thing ready to hand.

Formal declarations were obtained from the Douglasses and were laid before the King, the result of which was that Lords Erskine, Spencer, Ellenborough, and Grenville were appointed to make an inquiry. Lord Minto, writing to Lady Minto on June 9, 1806, says: "You will be very much shocked and hurt to hear that a most serious proceeding is commenced against the Princess of Wales. On Saturday last, at nine in the morning, the Duke of Kent arrived at Blackheath and told her . . . that he had been requested, for delicacy towards her, to be the bearer of the painful intelligence, and that he was to desire that six of her servants should attend the Commission that forenoon. Accordingly her own German maid and two other maid-servants, her butler or servant out of livery (Sicard), and two footmen were sent and were examined. The Princess under this shock had the astonishing courage and fortitude to keep her engagement that very day to dine in town at Lady Carnarvon's, where I was one of the company, and she told me this story in the middle of the circle, though not overheard. Lady Sheffield and Lady Carnarvon knew it, but nobody else. She had appointed a great dinner at Blackheath for the French princes on Tuesday (yesterday). This dinner took place, and I was of the party. Windham and I went together. He

had heard, though the whole proceeding is extremely secret, that nothing material had come out. Some indiscretions, but nothing serious."

Vague rumours were afloat as to the origin of the affair, and Lord Minto gives the following version: "There is reason to believe that Sir John and Lady Douglas are at the bottom of this attack upon the Princess. Sir John Douglas had a house in Greenwich Park which the Princess took or wanted to take from them, to give, I think, to Miss Cholmondeley when the Princess was made Ranger. Sir John was furious, and sent her, I hear, a threatening letter at the time. This is fortunate, and may give an odious turn to the inquiry and a favourable one to her. Yesterday she contrived to give me and Windham these particulars. She imputes the whole to Sir John Douglas and his lady, and acquits the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert. She says there is no sort of question which was not asked of her servants, but as there is no truth in the charge, they had nothing to tell. She seems more composed than the day before. However, I do not suppose the matter will rest here, and the inquiry will probably proceed. What is most unpleasant in the transaction is that one can hardly conceive so strong and shocking a step to have been taken without a great deal of consideration and previous information. Yet all one knows of her unreserved and indiscreet manners may make one understand an unfavourable judgment may have been formed without any *real* foundation."

It is easy enough with the assistance of the light which a hundred years have thrown upon the matter to solve the mystery, but at the time neither Lord Minto nor anybody else, save those concerned, could conceive that at the bottom of the "Enquiry" was a despicable and atrocious plot. It was a long time before it oozed out that the statements of Lady Douglas and others involved serious accusations against Sir Sidney Smith, Captain Manby, and Sir Thomas

Lawrence. Those who are curious on the matter will find all they want, and more, in the pages of Huish's "Memoirs of Queen Caroline." The evidence is of prodigious length, and more unprofitable and unsavoury reading it is hardly possible to imagine. The witnesses perjured themselves wholesale, and vied with each other in the concoction of lies to destroy the character of a helpless and unoffending woman.

Moreover, the stabs were inflicted in the dark, for the inquiry, afterwards famous as "The Delicate Investigation," was held in the utmost secrecy. Huish says: "We could point to two individuals now enjoying lucrative offices—one at the Cape of Good Hope, and the other at Botany Bay, who if he had had his deserts should have been sent thither in a different capacity—whose only services rendered to the country, which is taxed to pay their salaries, consist in the exertions which they used to prove that the virgin character of Caroline of Brunswick was tainted ere nature had implanted in her breast a single idea of love or passion." How much money went into the pockets of these suborned witnesses will never be known, but that they were paid for their infamous services, either directly or indirectly, is quite certain.

Five weeks went over, and the Commission issued its report. They found there was no truth in the charges brought against the Princess, save that "the circumstances stated to have passed between her Royal Highness and Captain Manby must be credited, until they receive some decisive contradiction." One of the most unjust points of the procedure adopted was its secrecy, and the scandalous fact remains that the Princess actually knew nothing of the evidence against her, and could not defend herself. When, however, she had the opportunity of contradicting what had been said against her, she was able to prove her innocence.

It was not until August 11 that a report of the

proceedings was in her hands, and a memorial containing the affidavits of the persons concerned was drawn up and sent to the King. In spite of the kindly feeling which His Majesty had towards his niece, the answer was cold and unsatisfactory. He was glad the main charges against her had been disproved, "but," he went on to say, "in those examinations, and even in the answer drawn in the name of the Princess by her legal advisers, there have appeared circumstances of conduct on the part of the Princess which His Majesty never could regard but with serious concern. The elevated rank which the Princess holds in this country, and the relation in which she stands to His Majesty and the Royal Family, must always deeply involve both the interest of the State and the personal feelings of His Majesty in the propriety and correctness of her conduct. And His Majesty cannot therefore forbear to express in the conclusion of the business his desire and expectation that such a conduct may in future be observed by the Princess as may fully justify those marks of paternal regard and affection which the King always wishes to show to every part of his royal family."

This "wiggling," severe as it was, would not have affected Caroline so much had it not given the Prince grounds for proceeding further in his scheme, which had for its end something more than mere separation from his wife. He was probably intensely mortified at the failure of the Inquiry. His hand was seen in what followed,

The Princess—who, it must be admitted, behaved with dignity and self-possession throughout this very trying time—on the receipt of the reply to her memorial asked for an interview with His Majesty, which the King granted, adding that it could not take place until he returned to London from Windsor, when he would appoint a day. He kept her waiting a month, however, and then wrote the following letter from Windsor :



GEORGE III.

From an engraving by McArdeU after J. Meyer.



“As the Princess of Wales may have been led to expect from the King's letter to her that he would fix an early day for seeing her, His Majesty thinks it right to acquaint her that the Prince of Wales, upon receiving the several documents which the King directed his Cabinet to transmit to him, made a formal communication to him of his intention to put them into the hands of his lawyers; accompanied by a request that His Majesty would suspend any further steps in the business until the Prince of Wales should be enabled to submit to him the statement which he proposed to make. The King therefore considers it incumbent on him to defer naming a day to the Princess of Wales until the further result of the Prince's intention shall have been made known to him.”

It was very evident the Princess could expect no mercy from her husband, and it was equally clear that he was working his ends through his father. Caroline, however, was preparing for battle, and at length sent a bombshell into the enemy's camp. Lord Minto tells the story in his Diary of the plans laid to publish a reply to the charges made against the Princess—the reply which came to be alluded to as “The Book.”

“The chief advisers of the Princess at this time,” he records, “were Lord Eldon and Mr. Spencer Perceval. It is well known that under their auspices was drawn up ‘The Narrative of the Circumstances and Proceedings upon the Subject of the Inquiry into the Conduct of the Princess of Wales with a Statement of Recent Events’; and it is also known that the threat of publication alarmed the Ministry for their existence and the Royal Family for their credit. While this painful business was going on, Lady Malmesbury, feeling warmly for the miserable position in which the Princess was placed, became far more assiduous in her attentions to her Royal Highness than she had ever been before. She paid frequent visits to Blackheath,

where she generally met Mr. Spencer Perceval, and after one of those visits she carried him to town in her carriage. As they drove along she remarked, with her usual playful exaggeration, 'I believe, Mr. Perceval, we might be sent to the Tower for what we are doing to-day.' 'To the Tower or the scaffold in such a cause!' was the enthusiastic reply.

Within little more than a year Mr. Perceval and Lord Eldon were in office, and on the announcement that "The Book" would shortly appear in print, both dropped sentiment and chivalry, forgot the Tower and the scaffold, and determined to suppress the retaliatory volume without loss of time. Lord Thurlow, an earlier friend of the Princess, is said to have advised the "Investigation," and, commenting on Thurlow's desertion, Lord Minto adds sarcastically, "'Put not your trust in Princes,' said the Psalmist, but the second clause of the same verse was rarely addressed to them—'nor in any of the sons of men.'"

Mr. Louis Melville, in his interesting volume "The First Gentleman in Europe," says that "Many attacks have been made upon Perceval for accepting office at this juncture, and there were some who connected his Chancellorship of the Exchequer with the suppression of 'The Book.' The attentions of the Prince of Wales were said to have undermined Perceval's fidelity to the Princess, but this was not the case," and Mr. Melville adduces proof of this by quoting Mr. Perceval's utterances to be found in that book of somewhat doubtful authority "The Secret History of the Court of England," the author of which has never been positively fixed.

But even supposing Mr. Perceval were sincere in his opinion, as given in the "Secret History," that Caroline was an innocent and injured woman, it does not follow that she might not have been sacrificed to political exigency, which, like charity, often covers a multitude of sins. It is probable also that in their hearts Perceval,



Eldon, and the rest of the Princess's friends of this period were tempted to say "A plague on both your houses!" Lord Minto had often to resign himself with mental groans to listen to the oft-repeated tale of Caroline's woes, and before the strife was ended by her leaving England she had tired out at least some of her adherents. This result perhaps was almost inevitable, for of all quarrels matrimonial ones are the least interesting to those not concerned.

So far as the suppression of "The Book" matters, it does not appear that the Princess made any strong remonstrances; while it is certain that she always maintained a sincere regard for Perceval, and five years afterwards sincerely mourned his tragic death at the hand of the demented Bellingham. Whatever may be the inward history of the political intrigues at this time, the fact remains that five thousand copies of "The Book" were ready to be launched on the town when Perceval accepted office; and the question is justified whether there was not some secret agreement between the leaders of the contending parties previous to the Cabinet crisis. At any rate, Messrs. Longman, the publishers of "The Book," would expect to be compensated for their loss. Who came to their rescue? To this question there is no definite answer.

When the new Ministry had settled down, its first act was an endeavour to throw oil on the troubled waters by issuing a minute of Council completely exonerating the Princess and concurring in the opinion of the late Ministry "that there is no longer any necessity for your Majesty being advised to decline receiving the Princess into your royal presence, [we] humbly submit to your Majesty that it is essentially necessary, in justice to Her Royal Highness and for the honour and interests of your Majesty's illustrious family, that Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales should be admitted with as little delay as possible into

your Majesty's royal presence, and that she should be received in a manner due to her rank and station in your Majesty's Court and family."

In a subsequent minute the Ministers advocated that apartments should be allotted the Princess in one of the royal palaces, and this for the time being was check to the Prince, for his wife received permission to attend a drawing-room, where she had a kindly reception from the King, and, countenanced by him, she could look upon the Queen's "cold and rigid courtesy" with indifference.

Then came the final scene—the royal birthday party, to which Caroline was invited. As if to emphasise the fact that henceforth it was to be a duel to the death between husband and wife, little Charlotte, the child of sorrow and mystery, was present and witnessed the last meeting of the Prince and her mother. She was then eleven years old, and, despite her childish appearance in her dress of Brussels lace, cut short in the skirt, after the fashion of the time, and pink and silver sash, she was already a woman in mind, and she must have been conscious of the life-tragedy in which she was doomed to play a part.

Fate ordained that the Prince and Princess should meet in the very centre of the room, and amid a breathless silence the gay throng drew back and the two were face to face. Dr. Doran describes the dramatic moment in a few masterly touches. "They bowed, stood face to face for a moment, exchanged a few words which no one heard, and then passed on; *he* stately as an iceberg; *she* with a smile half mirthful, half melancholy, as though she rejoiced that she was there in spite of him, and yet regretted that her visit was not under happier auspices."

But might not the Princess have been animated by other feelings—a consciousness of triumph that, in spite of her husband's efforts to blacken her name, she had emerged scathless; and might not his con-

sciousness have been mingled with a supreme sense of the secret which she and the Prince alone knew? To pursue this vein of speculation is impossible; but one can fancy that the eyes of both were directed towards the child, and that while to one she represented pity and love, to the other she was simply the means by which the mother could be further assailed and tortured.

It is to be remarked that in none of her confidential moods—and she had many—did the Princess ever allude to this period of anxiety, suspense, and anguish of mind. Maybe she wanted to forget. The nearest approach to any kind of revelation as to her thoughts on a subject which must have frequently engrossed her mind is contained in a reminiscence of which Lady Charlotte Campbell was the recipient.

“‘Shall I tell you something very curious?’ she once said. ‘I went one day in September to walk from my house at Blackheath, with Miss Garth, to Mr. Angerstein’s, who was very ill at that time. I went out the back way from my garden, through Greenwich Park, so that nobody could know me. Well, my dear, I was followed by two gipsies, who insisted on telling my fortune. “I have no money,” said I; but they persisted in following me, and did so till I came to Mr. Angerstein’s gate. I then told them that if they would wait there, they should tell my fortune when I returned. I found them there on my return, and what do you think they told me?’ The Princess,” writes Lady Charlotte, “looked fixedly at me, and rolled her eyes with that quick, penetrating glance which seems to examine all the folds of one’s thoughts at the same moment. ‘I am sure, madam, I cannot guess.’ ‘Why, they told me that I was a married woman, but that I should not be married long; and that my heart was a foreigner’s, and that I should go abroad, and there marry the man I loved, and be very rich and happy—they did,

by G——, tell me so—and how could they know that ?’

“How indeed,” comments the diarist, “unless they had been tutored to the tale? This was to myself. What I replied aloud was, ‘Very strange indeed, ma’am, but they make up many curious and nonsensical tales—that is their trade.’” ‘Twas very odd,’ she said, looking significantly; ‘was it not very odd?’ This conversation was all, save what I dread most; and the horror of thinking I shall one day hear it, and that ere long, *et en détail*, is the most terrible thought, and makes me very uneasy whenever Her Royal Highness honours me by a *tête-à-tête* interview. She swore to me as she was standing by the fire the other day, *à propos des bottes*, that Willikin was not her son. ‘No,’ said she, ‘I would tell you if he was. No,’ she continued, ‘if such little accident had happened, I would not hide it from you. He is not William Austin, though,’ added she; ‘but, *avouez-moi*, it was very well managed that nobody should know who he really is, nor shall they till after my death.’ I replied that I thought it was nobody’s business who the boy was, and that I, for one, had no curiosity to know. ‘That is for why I tell you,’ replied the Princess. ‘Then somebody ask me who Willikin is de child of. De person say to me, “Dey do say, he is your Royal Highness’s child.” I answered, “Prove it, and he shall be your king.” The person was silent after that.’ I could not resist laughing, and the Princess laughed also. She takes great pleasure in making her auditor stare. After a pause, she said, ‘Poor dear Willikin! I am so sorry he is growing big, but I am determined to have another little boy; I must always have a child in the house.’ I lifted my eyes to her person—I really fancied I saw the full meaning of her words; but she met my glance with a steady composure which reassured me, for I thought no one could look so calm, so bold, were there

anything to be ashamed of; and I replied, 'But, madam, you have the same interest in Willikin that ever you had.' 'Oh yes! to be sure, I love him dearly, but I must have a little child; he is growing too big, too much of a man.'"

The mysterious "Willikin" grew up to man's estate in the Princess's household, accompanied her abroad, and was in Italy at the time of her second period of trouble, and when Caroline died she left him the bulk of her fortune.

## CHAPTER VIII

1808

The Duke of Brunswick killed at Jena—A mystery—The Duchess comes to England—The Princess Caroline forbidden to visit Warwick House—Princess Charlotte described by Lady Charlotte Campbell—Charlotte's impulsive manners—The Black Duke of Brunswick—His moustaches—A visit to the Duchess of Brunswick—Her dingy lodgings—The good-natured Princess Augusta.

WHILE the Princess of Wales was being harassed by the "Delicate Investigation," a fresh misfortune descended upon her. In 1806 her father the Duke of Brunswick was called upon by Prussia to lead her troops against the French, and at the disastrous battle of Jena he was totally defeated and was himself mortally wounded. There was some mystery about his death, which was believed to have resulted either from treachery or revenge. According to the scandal of the time, he had robbed his aide-de-camp Montjoy of the affections of a certain French actress, who at the time was with Montjoy in camp. In Lord Malmesbury's Diary is an entry suggesting that Montjoy's brother, the pretended King of Bavaria, was in the French army, and knew exactly where on the day of battle the Duke of Brunswick was to be found, and the inference is that the tragedy was arranged.

The dying Duke was taken to Ottersen, where he died, and the Duchess fled to Sweden, afterwards making her way to England, landing at Gravesend on



SPENCER PERCEVAL.

From "A Circumstantial Report of the Pension Fund Scandal Enquiry."





July 7, and at once proceeding to her daughter's villa at Charlton. On the following day she saw her granddaughter Charlotte for the first time. Subsequently she purchased Chesterfield House, Blackheath, close to Montague House, so that she might be near the Princess Caroline; and soon after it was arranged that the Princess Charlotte should go to the house of the Duchess of Brunswick once a week, and there meet her mother. The Princess Caroline describes the routine observed in these visits in a letter to Miss Hayman: "On Saturdays my daughter comes at three o'clock to dine with my mother, when company is always asked to meet her, consisting of old and steady people. At four o'clock I appear; at six Charlotte leaves us, and I then make the party of my mother till eight." The company of "old and steady people" could not have given a child of eleven much entertainment. Indeed neither the Prince nor the Princess seems to have provided her with amusement or with companions of her own age. But, as will be seen, Charlotte was a girl of resource.

In the month following the arrival of the Duchess of Brunswick in England, Princess Charlotte, attended by Lady de Clifford and Mrs. Udney, went to Worthing. The Prince, who was then staying at Brighton, paid his daughter a visit and in an amiable mood invited her to dine with him at the Pavilion on his birthday, and sent her in his carriage to witness a review of the 10th Hussars, of which he was colonel. Charlotte wrote to her mother an account of her reception, and received from the Princess Caroline an answer which Lord Albemarle regarded as "an enigma, its whole tone being so utterly out of keeping with the well-known character and sentiments of the writer." The passage which Lord Albemarle found so puzzling was doubtless the following: "But especially I have been much gratified by the account in the papers of your reception at Brighton, which must

have been an honour and a pleasure to you that your father wished to see you on his birthday, and I trust you will never in any day of your life deviate from the respect and attachment which is due to the Prince your father."

Is there anything so very enigmatical in this? It was hardly likely the Princess would betray her real sentiments towards her husband to Charlotte, who, though, of course, quite aware of the strained relations between the two, could hardly be expected to realise the position. But there might have been another reason why Caroline should have written a diplomatic letter. Lady Rose Weigall says that in 1807 there was a moment when the Princess of Wales flattered herself that she would be allowed to have her daughter with her at Kensington, apartments in the palace having been assigned her; and she may have thought that a conciliatory letter to Charlotte, which would be sure to come under the notice of the Prince, might help matters. There was also a third reason why she should be diplomatic: she was surrounded by spies; M'Mahon and his creatures were always on the alert, and they were quite capable of intercepting Caroline's correspondence. The Princess was fond of mystifying the opposite camp, and it is quite possible she wanted to throw dust in the eyes of her enemies by her conciliatory words of advice to Charlotte.

The Prince, however, was relentless in what amounted to a persecution of his wife through her daughter. In the following year Charlotte was taken ill, and her mother broke through the regulation forbidding her to visit Warwick House. When, however, she wished to call at the house a second time, and Lady de Clifford communicated with the Prince on the matter, His Royal Highness was very angry, and wrote in plain terms that "in the regulations laid down and transmitted by His Majesty to the Princess it is precisely

defined that she is not to visit her daughter at Warwick House, that being considered as part of Carlton House. Charlotte's illness, which prevented her from going to her mother at Blackheath, was a case not foreseen, and was sufficient reason for relaxation in this particular instance. But as my daughter has been for some time able to go about again, that pretext must no longer remain, and I cannot assent to the Princess visiting at Warwick House on any other grounds. Her apartments not being ready at Kensington can be no excuse whatever."

With this answer the Princess must have abandoned hope. It is not to be wondered at that her heart hardened and that she became more than ever indifferent to what people said of her. She took up her residence in Kensington Palace, one of the plainest and least interesting of royal residences, and for some few years held a sort of Court, the life at which is reflected in the diary of Lady Charlotte Campbell, who became her lady-in-waiting about this time.

Previous to her appointment Lady Charlotte Campbell paid the Princess a visit, the occasion being Her Royal Highness's birthday. By this time the Princess's brother the Duke of Brunswick was living in England. He was subsequently killed at Quatre Bras at the head of his Black Brunswickers, so called from their uniform of black embroidered with silver death's-heads and cross-bones, worn ever since the death of the Duke's father at Jena. Lady Charlotte describes the Princess as "very injudiciously attired—wrapped in a pink dressing-gown." Of the Duke of Brunswick, who was present, she says in her caustic fashion: "He paid his sister a set compliment and gave her a ring of no value. (N.B.—All princes and princesses give shabby presents.)" The fair diarist proceeds:

"Her Royal Highness the old Duchess of Brunswick next arrived, and still I was desired to remain. I thought this conference would never end; and yet

it seemed not to delight either party. What a factitious life! The Duchess appears kind-hearted. The tears rolled down her cheeks as she said the poor Princess Amelia cannot live; she seemed really affected. I take her to be a kind-hearted, upright woman, but not in the least clever; very slow in her speech and in her comprehension; whereas her daughter is precisely the reverse, and has no patience with the repetition of phrases and the lengthiness of histories, for which, in fact, she feels no interest. . . . To-day I had the honour of meeting the Princess Charlotte at her grandmother's. She is very clever, but has at present the manners of a hoyden schoolgirl. She talked all sorts of nonsense to me. She is a fine piece of flesh and blood, but can put on dignity when she chooses, though it seems to sit uneasily upon her. What will be her fate? It is impossible not to feel an interest in any human being upon whom such a weight of responsibility is placed. . . . The royal family had sent her presents on her birthday; the Queen sent a very handsome aigrette, which the young Princess Charlotte observed was really pretty well, considering who sent it. She then laughed heartily, her own peculiar loud but musical laugh."

Later on, when Lady Charlotte becomes installed, she notes an instance of the girl's characteristic independence. She writes: "The Princess Charlotte always dines with her mother on Saturdays. This day Her Royal Highness came with Lady de Clifford and the Duke of Brunswick. As soon as she grows intimate with any one, she gives way to her natural feelings, and there is an openness and candour in her conversation which are very captivating. I pity her that she is born to be a queen. She would be a much happier being if she were a private individual. . . . A son of Lord H. F[it Fitzgerald] dined at K[ensington], a boy of about fourteen years of age, who appeared uncommonly clever and very agreeable. He is being

educated at Westminster. I asked him many questions about the school, which he answered most intelligently; but, from all I have seen, the Etonians are more polished. Lady de Clifford seems to be a good-natured, commonplace person, and the young Princess appears attached to her, which is a good indication of her ladyship's temper.

"The dinner over, which always weighs heavily on the Princess when composed of a family party only, Her Royal Highness recovered her natural gaiety. As soon as she returned to the drawing-room she began talking eagerly to Lady de Clifford *en tête à tête*. The Princess Charlotte ran from one end of the room to the other to fetch herself a chair. I rose and said how shocked I was that Her Royal Highness had not commanded me to do her bidding. 'Oh!' said her mother, 'I assure you she likes it; it is an amusement for her; she is kept so very strict, it is like feeling herself at liberty to fly about—is it not, Lady de Clifford?' To which the latter replied sharply, 'I assure your Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte has liberty enough with me.' This retort again produced a stiffness, and the time seemed to drag on heavily, until the Princess Charlotte and the Duke of Brunswick withdrew, when we went to the opera."

Charlotte's manners had certainly not the repose which marks the cast of Vere de Vere. It appears to have been the practice of Her Royal Highness to rush into her governess's room at all hours, and as a rule to leave the door open. "My dear Princess," said Lady de Clifford once to her, "that is not civil; you should always shut the door after you, when you come into a room." "Not I, indeed," was the reply in the loudest of voices; "if you want the door shut, ring the bell," and so saying she bounced out again. The only thing that can be said in excuse was that at this time she was very young.

The "Black" Duke of Brunswick was Charlotte's

favourite uncle. He is described as a sad and somewhat stern-looking man with sunken eyes and bushy eyebrows, and, what was then seldom seen in England, a pair of moustaches. The demeanours of the uncle and niece were the very opposites—his sedate and silent, hers impulsive and voluble. He seemed well satisfied to be a listener, and to be much interested in the Princess's lively and careless prattle. On her part she almost worshipped him. Once, after a visit from the Duke, she improvised a moustache, swaggered up and down the room, then, making a sudden stop, with arms akimbo, she uttered some German expletives which would probably have hardly borne a translation, and thus sought to give the visitor her conception of a "Black Brunswicker."

Of the Duke's moustaches—called a beard, by the way, in those days, as in Sterne's time moustaches were termed whiskers—Charlotte makes amusing mention in a letter to Lady de Clifford. She writes: "We go on pretty well, considering all things, without you. Heaven knows how very much I long to see you. Never have you been out of my mind since we parted. Our dear Duke sat for his picture yesterday, which was Saturday. It is coming on very well indeed. He dined with us and stayed till ten. I should have been quite happy if you had been with us. He asked kindly after you, and hoped when I heard last you was well. He sends his kind remembrances. . . . When you saw him [Duke of Brunswick] you took leave of his dear beard; it is all cut off, and he looks like us Englishmen. I took leave of it Saturday. I will tell you what will make you laugh. We were driving in Hyde Park yesterday, Sunday, and a man in a plain black coat, round hat, etc., etc., on horseback rode up close to the carriage and looked into it. I said to Mrs. U[dney], 'What a very impertinent fellow this is!' when what should I hear but '*Vous ne me connais [sic] pas?*' The carriage of course

stopped, and we spoke ; the Duke so changed that you would not know him again."

Lady Charlotte Campbell says of the Duke of Brunswick that he "is very near being a handsome man. His figure is light and graceful; and were it not that he carries his head ill he would be a noble-looking person. His eyes are deep-sunk in his head, more so than I ever saw in any one, and his brows are remarkably prominent with shaggy eyebrows. This circumstance gives him a sombre expression, and indeed the whole cast of his countenance is gloomy; but his features are regular, and when he smiles there is a transitory sweetness which is very striking by the contrast to his usual severity of expression. In manner he is very reserved—stiff and Germanic."

The Duke of Brunswick married a Princess of Baden, who died in 1808, leaving two sons, boys of five and six years old. The children, after narrowly escaping capture by Napoleon, were brought to England in 1810, and lived with their father in a dingy house in Vauxhall. The Princess of Wales hated her nephews, for no particular reason beyond the fact that they were "frightful." After the death of their father at Quatre Bras, the affairs of Brunswick were administered by the Prince Regent, and subsequently the eldest boy became ruler. His misgovernment led to an insurrection in 1830, when he was removed and his brother put in his place.

There may still be living many who were visitors to Paris in the days of the Second Empire, and possibly some of these will remember the deposed ruler, known then as the "eccentric Duke of Brunswick," who was conspicuous at the opera with his brilliantly painted face, a black wig, and a shirt front and fingers blazing with diamonds. His brother, Duke William, imitated him in all respects, though his dandyism was more subdued. In early youth "both had picked up the Regency style," says Mrs.

Crawford in her "Victoria, Queen and Ruler," "but blended with the German lust for what is garish."

Neither the Duke nor his mother the Duchess had put by for a rainy day, and when they came to England they were wretchedly poor. The Duchess's apartments near Charing Cross were as dingy as her son's lodgings at Vauxhall. Lady Charlotte Campbell gives a striking picture of the Duchess's *ménage*. She writes :

"Lady Mary Coke called upon me by appointment ; and we went together to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Brunswick. She [Lady Mary] thought more of me than she had ever done before, because I was on the road to royal favour, she herself being, in her own estimation, an engrafted sprig of royalty. We rumbled in her old tub all the way to New Street, Spring Gardens, much to the discomfiture of my bones ; for if the vehicle ever had springs, time has stiffened her joints as completely as it has done those of its *soi-disant* royal mistress. Lady Mary Coke was grandly gracious, and gave me dissertations on etiquette, such as it existed in her young days, till we reached our destination. We were ushered into the dirtiest room I ever beheld, empty and devoid of comfort. A few filthy lamps stood on the sideboard, common chairs were placed around very dingy walls ; and in the middle of this empty space sat the old Duchess, a melancholy specimen of decayed royalty. There is much goodness in her countenance and a candour and sincerity in her manner, and even in her rough and abrupt conversation, which are invaluable in a person of her rank, whose life must necessarily have been passed in the society of those whose very essence is deceit. . . . I sat patiently listening to Lady Mary and Her Royal Highness, who talked of lords and ladies of the past century and wondered at those of the present, and passed trippingly over the peccadilloes of their own contemporaries to vent all their moral indignation upon those of mine.





PRINCESS AUGUSTA.

From an engraving by Scriven after Sir Wm. Beechey.



“Old Mr. Livingstone [Mr. Livingstone was the tutor of some of the Princes—a good, dull man, Lady Charlotte calls him] was announced: poor man! what did he get by his attendance on royalty? the ill-will of all parties. He knows many things which, if told, would set London on fire. Soon after his entrance Lady Mary Coke arose and, kicking her train behind her, backed out of the room in capital style.”

Lady Charlotte's caustic comments on Lady Mary Coke are probably accounted for by the fact that both ladies ploughed the same furrow. Thirty years previous Lady Mary had kept a journal, in which she recorded with considerable freedom the gossip of Court circles. In a footnote to Lady Charlotte's description of the visit to the Duchess we are told that it was well known that Lady Mary Coke supposed herself to be the widow of the Duke of York, the King's brother. When her mother one day found the Duke of York in her apartment and rated her for the impropriety of her behaviour, she drew herself up with ineffable dignity and replied, “Madam, do you know whom you are talking to? You are talking to the Duchess of York.” Lady Mary Coke was the youngest daughter of John Campbell, Duke of Argyll. She was eighty-four at the time of her visit to the Duchess of Brunswick, and died the following year.

There are few records of any approach in the way of friendship towards the Princess of Wales on the part of her sisters-in-law. The Princess Royal, who married the King of Würtemberg and left England in 1797, was interested in the little Princess Charlotte, and, as we have seen, was very solicitous in a prim way concerning her moral and scholastic training, but always wrote to Lady Elgin and ignored the mother. The other Princesses held aloof, the exception being the good-natured Princess Augusta, whose account of a visit she paid to the Duchess of Brunswick is worth quoting. She writes:

“I have made acquaintance with my aunt, and nothing can exceed her good-humour, unless it be her *imprudence*. She is a very handsome old woman, not a *bit older* than I think any person of seventy might be, but uncommonly *old* if you compare her to my father and consider that there is but one year between them. She is the image of my uncle who died ten years ago, and so very like that it almost threw my cousin into fits when they first met. I have seen my sister-in-law twice with her, and it would be most unjust if I did not tell you that it was impossible for anybody to behave better and more prudently than she did. I really believe her *miseries and frights of last year* [an allusion to the “Delicate Investigation”] have been of service to her. Her attentions to her mother are quite exemplary, but I think they are mutual incumbrances to each other, living in the same house.”

The Princess Augusta’s visit was paid soon after the Duchess’s arrival in England, while she was staying at Blackheath with her daughter. It is evident that the two soon discovered that they were, as Princess Augusta put it, “mutual incumbrances,” and, as already mentioned, the Duchess removed to Chesterfield House. The kindly feeling and good sense displayed in the letter given above shows Princess Augusta in a pleasant and amiable light. It is impossible not to believe that much misery would have been spared the unhappy Caroline, and much scandal avoided, had the Princesses thawed in their coldness towards their brother’s wife. But of course they dared not go against the Queen’s orders.

## CHAPTER IX

1809

Lord Albemarle, Charlotte's boy-playmate — Charlotte's cookery—  
A royal tomboy — The Princess of Wales resides in Kensington  
Palace—Miss Berry is introduced to her—Caroline and the opera  
—A dinner party at Kensington Palace.

**D**URING Charlotte's first sojourn at Warwick House, Lord Albemarle made her acquaintance. He was a great favourite with his grandmother Lady de Clifford, and being at school at Westminster, he visited her frequently. He was two years younger than Charlotte, and the young lady naturally enough gloried in patronising him, after the manner of impulsive, headstrong girls. What Lord Albemarle has to say of her at this period is very pleasant. His introduction to the Princess was on a Saturday, a Westminster half-holiday, and from this time for the next three years many of the lad's Saturdays and Sundays were passed in her company. "She had just completed her twelfth year," he says. "Her complexion was rather pale. She had blue eyes, and that peculiar blonde hair which was characteristic rather of her German than of her English descent. Her features were regular, her face, which was oval, had not that fulness which a few years later took off somewhat from her good looks. Her form was slender, but of great symmetry; her hands and feet were beautifully shaped. When excited, she stuttered painfully. Her manners were free from the slightest affectation; they rather erred in the opposite extreme.

She was an excellent actress whenever there was anything to call forth her imitative power. One of her fancies was to ape the manners of a man. On these occasions she would double her fists and assume an attitude of defence that would have done credit to a professed pugilist. What I disliked in her, when in this mood, was her fondness for exercising her hands upon me in their clenched form. She was excessively violent in her disposition, but easily appeased, very warm-hearted, and never so happy as when doing a kindness. Unlike her grandmothers, the Duchess of Brunswick and the Queen of England, she was, as her letters abundantly testify, generous to excess."

Impetuous as she sometimes was, even to recklessness, Charlotte had plenty of shrewd common sense, and her advice to her boy-friend on one occasion, when he wanted to borrow from her, might have been given by one twice her age. Her precocious wisdom no doubt was due to the fact that circumstances had developed her character unusually early. She writes :

"You know me well enough to suppose that I never will refuse you a thing when there is no harm in it. But though I send you the money, still I must give you a little reprimand. You will, I hope, dear boy, love me as well though I do sometimes find fault with you. You will, if you go on asking for money and spending it in so quick a manner, get such a habit of it that when you grow up you will be a very extravagant man, and get into debt, etc., etc. Your grandmother de Clifford allows me £10 a month. But though I spend it, I take care never to go further than my sum will allow. Now, dear George, if you do the same you will never want for money; say you have a guinea, well then, never go beyond it, and in time you will save up. That is the way everybody does, and so never get into debt. If you will call at Warwick House, my porter, Mr. Moore, will give you half a guinea. If you use that well and give me an

exact account how you spend it, I will give you something more. I wish you was here. Write to me often, and believe that no one loves you better than I do, nor will be more happy to help you in all troubles than I."

"One of the Princess's great enjoyments," Lord Albemarle goes on to say, "was to go out shopping with Lady de Clifford. On these occasions she assumed the name of my sister. But Her Royal Highness was known everywhere, in spite of her alias. The borrowed character was not at all in her line, for her freedom of deportment contrasted oddly with the reserved and timid demeanour of the person whose name she assumed.

"One day I had to take a pair of my fagmaster's shoes to 'Cobbler Foots' to be mended. With the 'high-lows' slung over my shoulder, I was passing through the archway which connects Little with Great Dean's Yard when I espied the Princess Charlotte's carriage. Although I was not on much ceremony with Her Royal Highness, I did not care to be seen in the ordinary garb and dirt of a Westminster fag. So I tried to sneak by, but 'George,' uttered in a loud and well-known voice, proved to me that I could not preserve my incognito. Giving the shoes to another boy, I approached the carriage. The Princess's visit was to her newly appointed sub-preceptor, who after the Princess's marriage with Prince Leopold became her domestic chaplain. He was a handsome, good-humoured-looking man, physically and morally the very opposite to his right reverend principal the great U.P. He was somewhat portly in person, and looked as if he were not indifferent to the good things of this world. The Princess insinuated as much and indulged in some amusing banter on the subject, she preaching rigid abstinence, he solemnly protesting that he took no more than nature craved."

The following is very typical of the Princess's delight

in excitement : " One Saturday the Princess Charlotte and Lady de Clifford drove down to Westminster to take me back with them to Warwick House. I was not to be found at Mother Grant's, for there was a battle on that day, and as a matter of course I was on the ' fighting green.' Lady de Clifford went in search of me in the Great Cloisters, the grass quadrangle of which formed the scene of action. While my good grandmamma was reading quaint monumental inscriptions, her royal charge was grasping the rails of the Cloister and eagerly straining her eyes to watch the motions of the combatants."

Here is an amusing escapade : " Mrs. Durham, to whom the Princess Charlotte so frequently alludes in her letters," Lord Albemarle goes on to say, " was at this time cook to my grandmother. She was such an artiste in her business that the Prince of Wales, who occasionally honoured Lady de Clifford with his company at dinner, used to flatter her by asking her how she could afford to keep a man-cook. One day, however, at the hour of luncheon, things went ill ; the dowager's bell rang violently : the mutton chop was so ill dressed and so well peppered as to be uneatable. On inquiry it was discovered that the good old lady's royal charge had acted as cook, and her favourite grandson as scullery-maid ! "

Of the girl's exuberant spirits the Earl had a most vivid recollection. He tells his novel experience thus : " The house at Earl's Court, Brompton, which my father occupied, is next door to what was then a villa residence of Mr. Gunter, the confectioner, nicknamed by us children ' Currant-Jelly Hall.' Our house with the grounds attached would comprise, I suppose, about two acres. A small gate leads out of the garden into the road ; next come two large entrance gates, which open upon a court forming a carriage-drive to the house. Farther on are gates leading to the stables. From the stables is a sub-



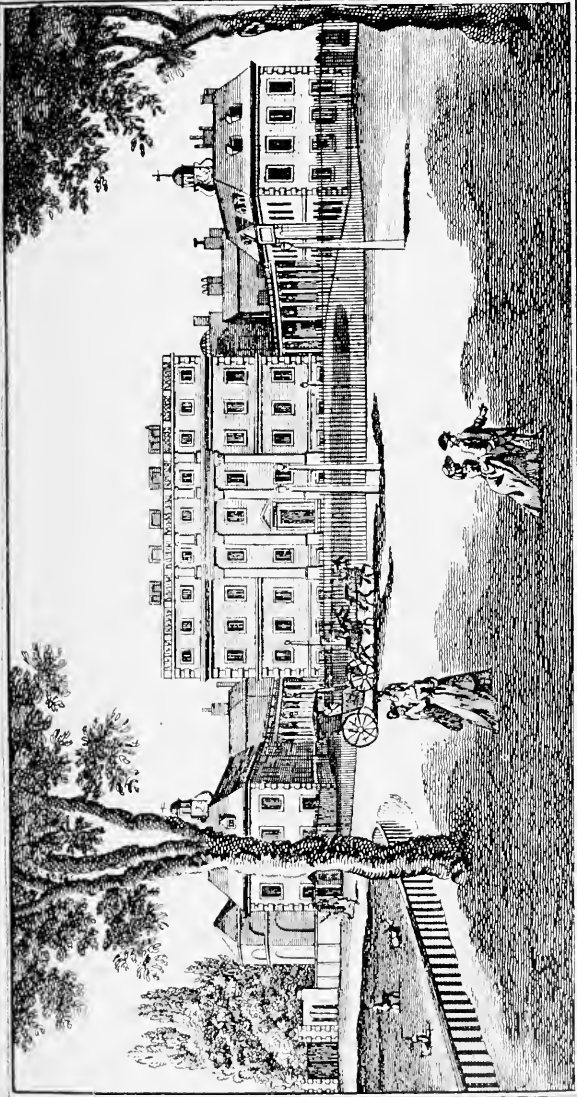
terraneous passage which communicates with a small orchard. Encircling the orchard is a gravel walk and a garden. A semicircular plot of ground laid out in flower-beds faces the drawing-room windows. This description of the locality is prefatory to the narrative of an event which occurred there one Sunday afternoon.

“In her visits to Earl's Court the Princess usually came in my grandmother's carriage, but on this occasion in her own. The scarlet liveries soon brought opposite to the entrance gate a crowd of people, anxious to get a glimpse of the Heiress Presumptive to the throne. Soon after her arrival at Earl's Court, I happened to pass outside the gates. I was asked by the bystanders, ‘Where is the Princess?’ I told her how desirous the people were to have a sight of her. ‘They shall soon have that pleasure,’ was the reply. Slipping out of the garden gate into the road, she ran in among the crowd from the rear, and appeared more anxious than any one to have a peep at the Princess. I would fain have stopped her, but she was in boisterous spirits, and would have her own way. She proceeded to the stable entrance, saddled and bridled my father's hack herself, and, armed with the groom's heavy riding-whip, led the animal through the subterranean passage to the garden gravel walk. She now told me to mount. I, nothing loth, obeyed. But before I could grasp the reins or get my feet through the stirrup leathers, she gave the horse a tremendous cut with the whip on the hindquarters. Off set the animal at full gallop, I on his back, or rather on his neck, holding on by the mane and roaring lustily. The noise only quickened his pace. I clung on till I came to the plot in front of the drawing-room windows, when the brute threw his heels into the air and sent me flying over his head.

“At the same moment the Princess emerged from the rose-bushes, panting for breath. She had hoped,

by making a short cut, to intercept the horse and its rider before they came into view. My cries brought the whole family on to the lawn. Of course the Princess got a tremendous scolding from Lady de Clifford. That she was used to, and took coolly enough. Unluckily for her, up came my father, in whose good graces she was desirous to stand high. By looks rather than words he expressed his disapprobation. In a short time quiet was restored, and my people returned to the house. But no sooner were the Princess and I alone again, than the heavy riding-whip was once more put into requisition, and she treated my father's son exactly as she had just treated my father's horse."

With the following the Earl's interesting reminiscences of Princess Charlotte come to an end: "Warwick House was so short a distance from my school that in the summer months I frequently made it 'a skip out of bounds.' I fear there was too much of 'cupboard love' in these visits, for I was blessed with an excellent appetite, and Mother Grant's food was execrable. The Princess, aware of this, used to bring me sandwiches of her own making. I once fancied that I must needs have a sharer in the good fare. So I took with me my chief crony, Robert Tyrwhitt, a gentleman whose name in more recent times has been frequently before the public as Chief Magistrate of Bow Street. As I was a privileged person at Warwick House, I passed with my companion unquestioned by the porter's lodge, and through a small door which opened from the courtyard into the garden. The Princess greeted us with a hearty welcome. In the garden was a swing, into which Princess Charlotte stepped, and I set it in motion. Unfortunately it came in contact with Bob Tyrwhitt's mouth, and knocked him over. He forthwith set up a hideous howl. Out came sub-governess, page, dressers, and footmen. Before they reached us, the Princess had



THE "QUEEN'S HOUSE," NOW BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

From an engraving by Taylor.



descended from the swing, had assumed an air of offended dignity, and was found lecturing me on the extreme impropriety of my conduct in bringing a boy into her garden without her privity and consent. The marvel is how she or I could either of us keep our countenance."

On the whole, during this first stay at Warwick House until 1810, when she was fourteen, Charlotte seems to have been fairly happy. For the time being, the friction between the Prince and Princess had subsided, and in the Princess's letters between 1809 and 1811 there is frequent mention made of "Charlotte," of her stay at Bognor, and of her mother's pleasure in seeing her again on her return to London. But an unhappy period was approaching. It was gradually becoming evident that the King's insanity was incurable, and Caroline could no longer disguise from herself that she had lost a valuable friend and adviser. Though not yet appointed Regent, the Prince had practically uncontrolled power, and there were signs that he intended to exercise this power over both his wife and daughter when circumstances were favourable.

But not until Parliament had actually placed the reins of power in the Prince's hands, and Charlotte was beginning to assert herself, did he take those active and arbitrary steps which brought his domestic affairs once more prominently before the nation, and turned his people against him, while their sympathies went out towards his wife and daughter. During 1808 and 1809 Caroline led a fairly quiet life at Kensington, and in her way held a sort of Court, which was not inappropriate to the prosaic Palace, over which, as Leigh Hunt puts it, "we can no more get up any enthusiasm as a building than if it were a box or a piece of cheese." Leigh Hunt differentiates admirably between the three royal palaces, Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, and Kensington Palace.

The first, he says, is a place to receive monarchs in, the second to set the fashion in, and the third to drink tea in; and the absence of state observed by the Princess of Wales was quite in keeping with the last-named characteristic.

Lively Miss Berry, Horace Walpole's great friend, has left in her Journals and Letters records of her acquaintance with the Princess of Wales, and allowing for the slight prejudice with which she, in common with the majority of ladies of her time, regarded Caroline, these records express an honest and impartial opinion.

Miss Berry's first meeting with the Princess was on the occasion of a christening at the house of Henry Hope, the author of "Anastasius," Caroline standing godmother to his second son. "She was holding a circle in the first drawing-room when we came in," says Miss Berry. "Soon afterwards all the world went to the statue gallery, where was dancing, late in beginning as usual. The Princess of Wales desired Lady Sheffield to present me to her. Talked for a minute or two of the Lockes. I stood by her chair till somebody else came up, and I got away. I don't think she was taken with me, as she saw, when I did not suppose she did not, the mien which I made to Lady Sheffield when she first proposed it to me—the presentation—which I changed for a proper Court face the moment I saw her looking and the thing inevitable. The last dance before supper she danced herself with Lyttelton. Such an exhibition! But that she did not at all feel for herself, one should have felt for her! Such an over-dressed, bare-bosomed, painted eye-browed figure one never saw! G. Robinson said she was the only true friend the Prince of Wales had, as she went about justifying his conduct." Miss Berry, like Miss Hayman, another maiden lady, had evidently come under the spell of the Prince.

The original of the following letter from the Prin-

cess of Wales to her daughter is in the collection of Mr. A. M. Broadley. It anticipates an interesting entry in Miss Berry's Journal. The "Expedition" alluded to was that of Walcheren, which turned out so disastrously for our arms :

*Caroline, Princess of Wales, to her daughter Charlotte,  
August 7, 1809*

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

"I had my pen ready to write to you when I received your amiable letter, to enclose to you with pleasure the first success of our Expedition! Thanks to Heaven (considering the circumstances) few lives have been lost. I trust they may succeed upon Flushing also, but I have a horror for Capitulation, which generally ends in very bad Conventions on our part. I have heard nothing from Germany, which rather surprises me. We must hope for the best. I am on the point to set out to see Strawberry Hill, which I have never seen, along with Lady Charlotte, and then we go with Lady Glenbervie to satisfy our voracious appetites, as we shall have nothing but food for our minds at Strawberry Hill, not knowing Mrs. Damer, and not wishing to be acquainted with her. Lady Cha: is very sensible of your kindness to her. She is well deserving of it, and is sincerely attached to you. I was yesterday for the last time at St. James's Chapel, but it was very dull, and I do not know the name of the clergyman.

"I have heard nothing of the Küpers, and I hope she will be well soon. After Church I went to see Lady Aberdeen and Lady Maria. We found Lord Hamilton just returned from Ireland: his illness has borne upon his legs, and he is perfectly upon crutches. I never can think that he will recover, and it made me quite melancholy to see on the second sight the dreadful loss his family will sustain in this only and

amiable son. He is to leave London, as soon as he is a little recovered from the fatigue of his journey, for Dover Castle, with the Castlereaghs, who will take him there for the benefit of the sea air. I must now take leave of you, as my carriage is ready. My best love to Lady de Clifford, and accept for yourself my single and unalterable affection, with which I remain for ever

“ Your attached Mother,  
“ C. P.”

The visit of the Princess was paid while Miss Berry was staying at Strawberry Hill. “Mrs. Damer,” writes Miss Berry, “had received notice two or three days before that she was to be thus surprised—for a *surprise* it was to be. She (the Princess Caroline) knew we were here, and she asked for us. We joined the party in the Holbein room. The Princess talked a great deal more than she looked at anything, and seemed pleased to have more people to talk to; the pictures, etc., of the house and observations on them came merely to fill up gaps and give new matter for discourse. She was in her very best manner, and her conversation is certainly uncommonly lively, odd, and clever. What a pity that she has not a grain of *common* sense! not an ounce of balance to prevent high spirits, and a coarse mind without any degree of real moral taste, from running away with her and allowing her to act indecorously, whenever an occasion offers! Were she always to conduct herself as she did here to-day, she would merit the character of having not only a remarkably easy and gracious manner, but natural cleverness above any of her *peers* that I have seen, and a good many have at different times fallen under my observation. After walking over the house she was carried into the library, where refreshments were prepared. Of these she did not taste, but proposed our all sitting down, which we did



for about half an hour, then departed, with a thousand thanks to Mrs. Damer, and shaking us all by the hand."

Caroline was certainly indifferent to what was said about her, for she brought with her on this occasion the mysterious Willikin, the cause of so much trouble. Miss Berry remarks: "She had with her the little boy whom she brings up. Some poor body's son at Deptford and whom she would do well to send to school, but does very ill to take about with her during his holidays. She is not of a disposition to want either the amusement or endearing tenderness of a child; and, after all that has been said of her, it may be easily guessed what may be said of this little boy of about seven or eight years old."

The Princess was clearly looked upon by her lady friends as a possible source of embarrassment. Miss Berry notes, on the day after the visit to Strawberry Hill, a proposition from the Princess to Mrs. Damer to share a box with her at Covent Garden Theatre on opera nights. "This," says Miss Berry, "is an arrangement nobody will make with her," and, adds the diarist with generous indignation, "How ridiculous, how ill-managed and mean, in this extravagant and spending country, that a Princess of Wales should not be able to have a box at the national theatre to herself—that the King should not give a sum yearly and have so many boxes for the use of his family!" One may well agree with this sentiment; but George III. and Charlotte were not fond of the opera—they preferred the more sedate oratorio.

The story is told that George once tried to induce Lord North, who hated music in every shape and form, to attend the "Ancient Music" concerts, of which His Majesty was a patron. North refused emphatically. "Your brother never misses them," the King protested. "Sir," was North's rejoinder, "if I were as deaf as my brother, the Bishop, I would never miss them either." It may be, however, that after the

“Delicate Investigation,” “The Book,” and the rest of the Blackheath scandal, King George, and most assuredly the Prince of Wales, thought that the less the troublesome Princess was seen in public the better.

Miss Berry’s last reference to the Princess during 1809 is on December 9, and from this date she is silent until 1811. She writes: “Dined with the Princess of Wales at Kensington at seven o’clock. Company only Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Mr. Gell, ourselves, and Mrs. Lisle in waiting. Mrs. Lisle a sad aid to the Princess in entertaining her company, not having a word to throw at a dog—but the Princess wants no aid. Dinner went off very well; servants sent away and dumb waiter. Dinner and dessert good but plain, served upon the magnificent plate of the Prince of Wales. In the evening nobody else came. The Princess talked of the apartments upstairs, and proposed our looking at them. Luckily not a very cold night. We all wrapped up, and taking two candles with us, sallied upstairs. The royal apartment very handsome, both in size and fittings up; furniture, properly speaking, there is at present none. In the first room some of the finest cork models I have ever seen of all the principal ruins of Rome, and in all the rooms very fine pictures as far as we could judge by the light of two glimmering candles carried in different hands. Supper on the table when we came down, and nearly one before we got away.”

When Miss Berry next went to Kensington Palace, some time afterwards, Princess Charlotte was there, and what the observant lady thought of the girl will be told in its proper place.

## CHAPTER X

1809

Charlotte's precocity—The accession to the throne, and the rights of the Duke of York—Did the Dukes of York and Clarence plot to secure a marriage between the Prince and Caroline?—Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke and the Duke of York—Mrs. Clarke wears the Princess Caroline's jewels—Mrs. Clarke's supposed parentage—King Theodore of Corsica—How Mrs. Clarke became acquainted with the Duke of York—George III. at Worthing—The King's love of homely pleasures—The Pension Fund scandal.

**T**HOUGH Charlotte in 1809 had not long entered her teens, she had become a woman in mind and experience, and almost one in physical development. In spite of having been kept in seclusion, it was hardly likely she was ignorant of what was going on in the world around her, and especially must the notoriety the Prince of Wales and his brothers had achieved have reached her ears.

All the uncles, save the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, were associated with scandals, and Charlotte could have had but little respect for her father's brothers. It was inevitable this feeling should foster her desire for independence, and equally inevitable she should come to think that in marriage was her only chance of freedom. The Princess had this idea in her mind long before the Prince of Orange was chosen for her husband. She had early flirtations, and the Prince of Wales was constantly uneasy lest she should make a *mésalliance*.

The marriage tie had been as lightly regarded by the Prince's brothers as by himself; they had followed

the bent of their passions, and the example presented to the impulsive and impressionable Charlotte was neither salutary nor edifying. To make matters worse, it chanced that fragments of stories of their inner lives—of three of the royal dukes, at all events—became public property about the time when Charlotte, though a girl in years, was a woman in judgment.

The Duke of York was the first of the royal dukes whose misdoings and folly furnished matter for public comment and censure. For more than one reason the Duke of York was of greater interest to Charlotte than were his brothers. As, until the Duke of Kent married, none of the brothers save the Duke of York had wives of royal descent, the accession of Charlotte to the throne was of the more importance, for failing her, the right fell to the Duke of York. A link therefore existed between the Princess and this particular uncle. Moreover, the Duchess of York was not looked upon with great favour by the royal circle, and this also was a bond of union, seeing that Charlotte was in exactly the same position; and in addition, of all her royal relatives, the Duke and Duchess of York took the greatest notice of the lonely girl.

But there was another connection, of which, however, Charlotte was ignorant. This was the circumstance that it was on the favourable reports of the daughter of the Duke of Brunswick, brought to the Prince of Wales by the Dukes of York and Clarence, that the Prince was induced to offer his hand in marriage to the Princess Caroline. A letter sent to Lady Charlotte Campbell, which she published in her Diary, throws a little light upon the transaction. The letter (believed by Mr. Frederick Chapman to have been written by Galt, who edited the last two volumes of the Diary) runs as follows :

“It respects the Queen’s conduct prior to her marriage, and my informant is the once-noted Mrs.



FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF YORK AND ALBANY.  
From "A Circumstantial Report of the Pension Fund Scandal Enquiry."



Mary Anne Clarke, whose informant, as she said, was the Duke of York. You are aware how I *wheedled* her [Mrs. Clarke] to show me the notes she had prepared for her own memoirs. In consenting to do so she happened to mention that the old King George III. had ordered a set of jewels for the Princess, and that the Duke when they were ready, being to take them to Windsor, brought the casket on the Saturday before to Mrs. Clarke. Nothing less in consequence would serve the *chère amie* than to go to the opera decked in the borrowed plumes; and she actually did wear the diamonds there that night. This led her to speak of many other things which His Royal Highness told her of the Princess, and how it was at one time proposed he should marry her; and for that purpose he went previously to see how the land lay at the Court of Brunswick; the result of which was that he did not like the Princess in many things that he had heard of her, deeming her ways not likely to take in England. I will not say that I believed all to have been true which Mrs. Clarke told me; for I did not; but had there not been something *coarsish* in the impression made on the Duke, and which may have led him to speak of the Princess disparagingly, Mrs. Clarke would not have said to me what she did; for her opinion of the Princess of Wales was on the whole kindly; indeed she [Mrs. Clarke] was not deficient in that quality, and generally expressed herself respecting even the Duchess of York with much more consideration than might *a priori* have been expected. However, what I mean to deduce from what she said is that the Princess of Wales before her marriage was hoydenish, and addicted to practical jokes, and not at all *adorable* in the eyes of the Duke, whom, by the way, she always spoke of (that is, Mrs. C. said) as naturally subject to *mauvaise honte*."

Now, the curious thing is that the Duke, after having made up his mind that Caroline, for the reasons

assigned, would not suit him, nevertheless spoke of her in such terms as to make the Prince favourably inclined. The Duke of Clarence also gave a flattering account of Caroline, but, according to Malmesbury, as already mentioned, in order to "annoy the Duke of York." If this be true, it only adds to the puzzle. What was the real history of these intrigues? No one can say; but the outcome was pretty evident, for had not the Prince been in the first instance disposed towards the Princess of Brunswick, the English nation would have been saved the spectacle of unhappiness afterwards presented, and most certainly there would have been no Princess Charlotte.

In 1809, when Charlotte was thirteen years old, the great scandal into which Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke dragged the Duke of York came to a head, and although there is but sparing allusion to this trouble by the diarists and letter-writers of the day who busied themselves with the affairs of the Princess of Wales and her daughter, the matter, which was publicly discussed throughout the length and breadth of the land, could not fail to be talked about in the household at Windsor, where Charlotte passed half her time.

The disclosures so glaringly illustrate the loose morality of the period and the shameful traffic in lucrative posts which went on, if not with the assistance of those in power, at least with their cognisance, that they cannot be passed over. Moreover, the scandal is typical of the intrigues which surrounded Princess Charlotte from the hour of her birth to the time of her marriage.

Not an atom of romance is attached to the relations between the Duke of York and Mary Anne Clarke. The story is one of sordid motives on the part of the lady and weak self-indulgence and folly on the side of her royal admirer, but it is typical of the times.

Mary Anne Clarke was the daughter of a printer



named Thompson, living in Bowl and Pin Alley, near White's Alley, Chancery Lane—so at least it is stated in the various biographies published at the time. According to Mr. Cyrus Redding, however, she was really the granddaughter of Theodore, King of Corsica, and daughter of Colonel Frederick, a brave, well-read gentleman who, under the pressure of a temporary monetary difficulty, occasioned by the dishonourable conduct of a friend, blew out his brains in the churchyard of St. Margaret's, Westminster.

Theodore Anthony, King of Corsica, was a remarkable man who had to endure many vicissitudes of fortune. He was born at Metz, and after travelling over Europe in various capacities landed at Corsica in order to free that island from the oppressions of the Genoese. He was crowned King on April 15, 1736, and soon found himself at the head of twenty-five thousand men. He kept a splendid court and bestowed titles like one to the manner born, and finding himself in need of help to maintain his position, he went disguised to Paris, which he was ordered to quit. He then proceeded to Amsterdam and subsequently to Naples, where he was arrested in the house of the Dutch consul. On his liberation he made various attempts to recover his crown, but without success, and finally he came to England, where his poverty was such that he was for several years a prisoner in the King's Bench. He died in December, 1756, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Anne's, Soho, where a monument recording his misfortunes was erected to his memory. Theodore lived on his wits and not always creditably. Horace Walpole, who paid for his monument, was moved to say: "I would have served him if a king, even in jail, could he have been an honest man."

The party writers of the day tell with much circumstance how Mary Anne married, when only sixteen years old, one Clarke, the son of a builder in Angel Court, Snow Hill, and after three years of married

life the couple removed to Craven Place, Kensington Gravel Pits, where they separated, and the young lady, not then twenty, went her own way. She had several wealthy admirers, and no doubt lived what is called a life of pleasure. Mr. Redding's version is that she married an excise officer much older than herself, and that she attracted the attention of the Duke of York through applying to him for a subscription towards the expenses of publishing a poem called "Ianthé" which she had written, and from the sales of which she hoped to make a little money, her father having left her quite destitute.

Captain Gronow gives a much more romantic account of the commencement of the lady's acquaintance with the Duke. We learn from him that about the age of sixteen she was residing at Blackheath. She was a sweet, pretty girl, and in her daily walk across the heath she passed on two or three occasions a handsome, well-dressed cavalier, who, finding that she recognised his salute, dismounted and, pleased with her manner and wit, begged to be allowed to introduce a friend. Accordingly, on her consenting, a person to whom the cavalier appeared to pay every sort of deference was presented to her, and the acquaintance ripened into something more than friendship.

Not the slightest idea had the young lady of the position in society of her lover until she accompanied him to the theatre, where she occupied a private box, when she was surprised at the ceremony with which she was treated and at observing that every eye and every lorgnette in the house were directed towards her in the course of the evening. She accepted this as a tribute to her beauty. Finding that she could go again to the theatre when she pleased and occupy the same box, she availed herself of this opportunity with a female friend, and was not a little astonished at being addressed as "Your Royal Highness." She then

discovered that the individual into whose affections she had insinuated herself was the Duke of York, who had not long before united himself to a lady for whom she had been mistaken.

This sounds too much like the sentimental novel of the period; and the suggestion that the first meeting was at a watering-place is more likely to be true. Whatever may have been Mrs. Clarke's motives, she was always very reticent on the subject of the beginning of her association with the Duke, and nothing is quite certain until in 1804 she set up an elaborate establishment in Gloucester Place; her "superb house, her elegant carriage, her numerous servants, and every appendage of quality causing the utmost curiosity, the wonder, however, ceasing when it was observed who was the principal visitor."

Besides Gloucester Place, she had another residence at Weybridge, which, as one biographer slyly remarks, was "conveniently situated in respect to Oatlands," the Duke's country seat. In the summer of 1805 she visited Weymouth, where she shared in the admiration bestowed upon all the most fashionable visitors, and where it was acknowledged she had more comment than the Queen—a statement which can readily be believed.

Weymouth, the Hon. Amelia Murray tells us, was a great place in those days. Two royal yachts and three frigates gaily decked with flags were to be seen in the bay, a picturesque camp of sharpshooters on the look-out for a possible descent of "Bony" lent excitement, and this excitement was added to by the Hanoverian cavalry careering on the sands, and singing their "fine musical choruses" as they galloped by. An infantry band played the lively music of the day; beautiful girls and charming children thronged the esplanade; and the King and Queen, walking in homely fashion among their subjects, suggested an informality not to be seen at any other watering-place.

George III. was at his best at Weymouth. Sometimes he would command a play at the small theatre, engage the whole dress circle, and send round for all the young ones to fill it. A letter from a young girl to her aunt, given in the Frampton "Journal," furnishes a pleasant glimpse of the King and his homely ways with children. The girl writes: "Yesterday morning Aunt Frampton took Selina and me in her open carriage to Weymouth, and there we saw the King, just before he got upon his horse, and Mr. Pitt and a great many other gentlemen with him. He came and spoke to Aunt Frampton, and then both she and Dr. Heberden whispered who we were, then His Majesty came and spoke to me a great deal and said, 'Do you not think your sister Fanny very much improved?' I said 'Yes, sir,' and curtsied. Then he said, 'What, what, what?' which Aunt Frampton said made me look quite pale, but I said 'Yes, sir—yes, sir' over again."

The same girl went to a ball at the Weymouth Rooms, and describes how she "danced four dances with her partner, for it was the King's desire we should dance together all night, and there were only four dances in all, three of which were danced before the Royal Family went, and three little girls, Miss Gunns, danced a figure dance besides. . . . Next Friday the King has invited all of us to go to his ball. The children are to dance first, then the grown-up ladies and gentlemen."

Of the King's ball the writer says, it began at seven and the Royal Family were quite exact to the time. "There were three sets, the children at one end of the room, where there was a rail put across, and then the other ladies and gentlemen divided into sets, which made it very pleasant. I was between both (that is, most of the children were mere babies; the eldest was not older than eight, and the youngest of the Pouletts was about two); but however, mamma said if I could get in with the children, she should like

it the best, so my grandmamma spoke to the Queen, and Princess Elizabeth came up to me directly and told me to take her arm, and that she would get me a partner, so away we went together, through all the crowd to the King, and she said that the youngest Miss Shirley wanted partners to dance with the children, so the King said he would try to get me one ; but however he forgot it. . . . The King stood between the sets part of the time, so that we could not help turning our backs on him. He was the greatest part of the time playing with all the children, who made such a riot with the Duke of Cambridge. The King stood the whole evening, and carried about the little children, and danced with them."

"I have been seated," says Miss Murray, "on the old King's knee, and I remember he charged me always to wear a pocket ; for George III. was shocked by the scanty dresses"—the classical draperies favoured by the Empress Josephine were the vogue—"then in fashion, which made it out of the question for ladies to wear pockets." Everything at Weymouth was on the simple scale dear to the heart of "Farmer George." The Lodge, which was the royal residence, was very small, and houses for the attendants and servants were engaged in Gloucester Terrace, and often the neighbours and visitors were delighted by seeing the royal cooks at work in the backyard and tossing royal pancakes in the air.

From Miss Murray also we glean some interesting information in regard to the dress of the period. She says the children wore the simplest attire, and that it was only the married women who dressed expensively. Young ladies wore rather scanty drapery, so far as neck and shoulders were concerned, but, oddly enough, it was considered vulgar and forward to leave the forehead uncovered. Certain young ladies who had been abroad, and were in consequence to some extent "emancipated," were thought quite bold-

looking because they wore their hair Madonna-fashion. Ladies not in their first youth very generally wore wigs. The Princesses had their heads shaved, and wore wigs ready dressed and ornamented for the evening, to save time in the toilet. Perhaps the middle-aged ladies recollected the tortures their mothers went through during the last twenty-five years of the previous century, when it was the fashion to have one's hair built up mountains high, the operation lasting half the day. One of the most extraordinary freaks of fashion Miss Murray records was the shaving of heads of widows. It was considered *de rigueur*, and Miss Murray remembered her mother's beautiful hair being cut off for her deep mourning. And not only this; she never allowed it to grow again, but always wore a wig. Another martyr to the fashion of the day was Lady Ilchester, who, when in attendance on the Queen at Weymouth, was obliged to cut off her hair and wear a wig, in order to be ready for dinner on returning from the royal yacht.

Mrs. Clarke, whose portrait suggests that she was not easily abashed, held her own among the "quality" of Weymouth, and "Good Queen Charlotte" must have been terribly scandalised by her flaunting about with her son, "tall, with immense embonpoint," as Stockmar describes him, "and with not proportionately strong legs, holding himself in such a way that one is always afraid he will tumble backwards."

Whatever may be said against Mrs. Clarke—it was, of course, the policy of the Duke's friends to throw as much mud as they could at her in order to excuse him—it is by no means certain she was the instigator of her extravagant establishment at Gloucester Place. It is said that the lavish outlay was at the suggestion of the Duke, but however this may be, there is no doubt Mary Anne lived in great state. She had more than twenty servants, without reckoning three men



*Harriet Anne Clarke*

From an engraving by Freeman after Buck.





cooks, each of whom was paid a guinea a day, while the board-wages and liveries cost £1,000 a year. The furniture was the most magnificent that could be procured of the kind. Over £500 was paid for her pier-glasses, her wine-glasses were valued at two guineas apiece, and the service of plate she bought "from Birkett the pawnbroker" originally belonged to one of the Princes of Bourbon. Yet, according to one of her biographers, she was not so extravagant as she might have been, and as many ladies of her class certainly were.

In a reference to this period of pleasure Gronow adds another story to the many which have been put forward as to the "past" of this elusive and fascinating woman. He speaks of the opportunity she had in Gloucester Place of surrounding herself with persons of a sphere far beyond anything she could in her younger days have dreamt of; her father "having been in an honourable trade, and her husband being only a captain in a marching regiment." Gronow probably was only repeating a piece of gossip when he set this down. He goes much nearer the mark in his opinion, that the Duke must have known that Mrs. Clarke's style of living was upon a scale of great expense, and that he himself contributed little towards it. It was not surprising therefore that the lady, being a woman of brains and resource, set to work to discover some new way of paying old debts.

The Duke of York had no greater sense of honour than had his brother the Duke of Clarence, who complacently lived on the earnings of Mrs. Jordan. Mrs. Clarke was treated in a shamefully mean way. When His Grace cast her off in 1806, he made this "declaration" through his agent, Mr. Adam, "that the Duke thought it his duty, if her conduct was correct, to give her an annuity of £400 a year, to be paid quarterly; that he could enter into no obligation in writing to be bound or otherwise; that it must rest entirely upon

his word to be performed according to her behaviour, and that he might therefore have it in his power to withdraw the annuity in case her behaviour was such as to make him consider that it was unfit it should be paid." No wonder Mrs. Clarke treated the proposition with disdain.

## CHAPTER XI

1809

Colonel Wardle's charges against the Duke of York—The inquiry—The fascinating Mary Anne Clarke—The charges against her proved—The Corporation of London thanks Colonel Wardle—The Duke of York resigns his command—Mrs. Clarke's "Memoirs" suppressed on payment of £10,000—Creevey's story of the scandal—Gronow's explanation—Sir Richmond Phillip's version—Mrs. Clarke's subsequent career—A curious allegation against Queen Charlotte.

SOME little time went by, and meanwhile mysterious insinuations against the Duke of York began to be whispered, and paragraphs, hinting at misdoings, appeared in the newspapers. Then some people went so far as to say that the Duke would not be long Commander-in-Chief. At length the storm burst. In January 1809 Colonel Wardle, an officer of militia, drew the attention of the House of Commons to the corruption which he alleged existed in connection with the "half-pay fund" which was established under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief. This fund was established and intended for the reward of merit, either by the appointment of meritorious officers to commissions as they became vacant, or by selling such commissions and applying the sums received to the redemption of half-pay commissions or to the "compassionate fund." If these commissions were otherwise disposed of, the authority vested in the Commander-in-Chief was abused and the objects of the half-pay fund were not fulfilled.

It is not necessary to go into more than one case

instanced by Colonel Wardle, as it sufficiently shows the method adopted. The case is that of Captain Tonyn, of the 48th Regiment of Foot, who had been promoted to a majority in the 31st Regiment, for which promotion he was indebted to the influence of Mrs. Clarke.

The terms of the agreement were that Mrs. Clarke should be paid £500 upon Captain Tonyn being gazetted. Now, the regulated difference between the price of a company and a majority was £1,100, but instead of this being paid to the fund, Mrs. Clarke had £500 and the fund gained nothing. This £500 Mrs. Clarke handed over to "Birkett the pawnbroker" in part payment for the service of plate already mentioned, the balance being afterwards paid by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief. The conclusions Colonel Wardle held to be clearly deducible from this case were, first, that Mrs. Clarke possessed the power of military promotion; secondly, that she received pecuniary consideration; and thirdly, that the Commander-in-Chief was a participator in the benefit derived from such consideration.

Colonel Wardle was well supplied with evidence in support of his charges, and among other things he exhibited a written scale of Mrs. Clarke's prices for different commissions. From this scale it appeared that while the regulated prices for a majority, a company, a lieutenancy, and an ensigncy were respectively £2,600, £1,500, £550, and £400, Mrs. Clarke's charges were £900, £700, £400, and £200. In addition, he alleged that there was at that moment a public office in the city for the sale of commissions at the same reduced scale as that of Mrs. Clarke.

The House could not, of course, deal at once with such a serious matter, and a committee was appointed to make inquiry, and Mrs. Clarke was the principal witness examined. It is not too much to say that she fascinated the inquirers.

Like many other ladies who have been styled "adventuresses," Mrs. Clarke was not remarkable for her surpassing beauty. She was small in size, her face was oval but inclined to roundness, her nose was small, she had dazzling dark eyes "beaming with archness and captivating intelligence," her mouth was well shaped, her teeth even, her skin delicately fair without being of a dead white. She had in addition a pretty colour, and one of her particular attractions was a well-shaped arm. She was certainly no fool, and one can easily understand when the Duke came under the spell of her fascinations that she could wheedle him to do what she liked.

One who was present during her examination before the House of Commons has pleasantly described the scene. "I was," he says, "in the House of Commons when Mary Anne Clarke first made her appearance at the bar dressed in her light blue pelisse, light muff, and tippet. She was a pretty woman rather of a slender make. It was debated whether she should have a chair; this occasioned a hubbub, and she was asked who the deeply veiled person with her was. She replied that she was her friend. The lady was instantly ordered to withdraw, then a chair was ordered for Mrs. Clarke, and she seemed to pluck up courage, for when she was asked about the particulars of an annuity promised to be settled on her by the Duke of York, she said, pointing with her hand, "You may ask Mr. William Adam there; he knows all about it."

During the investigation, which lasted without intermission for seven weeks, Mrs. Clarke was examined again and again, and by "the readiness and smartness of her answers to the infinity of questions gave a degree of relief to the long and wearisome examination." Though she was made to contradict herself on one or two minor points, she could not on the whole, says the *Annual Register*, by any means be charged with prevarication.

The inquiry proved beyond the possibility of a doubt the connection of Mrs. Clarke with the persons who paid or promised to pay her sums of money for promotions or for appointments, but as to the Duke's knowledge of Mrs. Clarke's manœuvres and his sharing the profits, this was a charge the proof of which depended solely on the evidence of the lady herself. Of course under such circumstances it was the policy of the Duke's defenders to bespatter Mrs. Clarke with abuse and blacken her character as much as possible; but she held her own, and there were not a few who believed that the Duke must have known something of what was going on. However, the result of the committee's investigation was practically to exonerate the Duke, but in such a way that this exoneration may be termed nothing more than giving him the benefit of the doubt. As he had the wisdom to retire from the command of the army before the proceedings were quite terminated, he relieved the House of Commons from a disagreeable position. A resolution was carried to the effect that the House did not think it necessary to proceed any further in the matter so far as it related to the Duke, and the scandal was allowed to lapse into obscurity.

The eyewitness whose description of Mrs. Clarke we have quoted says: "Perceval fought the battle manfully. The Duke of York could not be justified for some of his acts—for instance, giving a footboy of Mrs. Clarke's a commission in the army, and allowing an improper influence to be exerted over him in his thoughtless moments; but that the trial originated in pique and party spirit there can be no doubt, and, as he justly merited, Colonel Wardle, the prosecutor in the case, sunk into utter oblivion, whilst the Duke of York, the soldier's friend and the beloved of the army, was after a short period (having been superseded by Sir David Dundas) replaced as Commander-in-Chief and died deeply regretted and fully meriting

the colossal statue erected to him with his hand pointing to the Horse Guards." The writer of this was of course a partisan of the Duke's, and his partiality can be understood. The reverse was really the case. The eyes of the country were opened to the corruption and gross abuses going on everywhere, and the Corporation of London passed a resolution of thanks and gratitude to Colonel Wardle.

Of course the caricaturists could not pass over so tempting a subject for their pencils, but very few of their efforts have been preserved. We have one in our possession which represents Mrs. Clarke as Eve driven from Paradise by Mr. W. Adam. In the background is her house in Gloucester Place, on which is the announcement "Commission Warehouse."

Subsequently the Colonel brought an action against Mrs. Clarke and two men named Wright for libel, but lost the day. It was during this trial that Mrs. Clarke showed her readiness of retort. "Under whose protection are you living now?" asked the judge pompously. "Under yours, my lord," replied the lady, with a malicious sparkle of her dazzling eyes. The laugh, it need hardly be said, was not with his lordship.

Creevey has chronicled a good deal of gossip concerning the complicated business. The following entry in his Journal, dated November 10, 1809, runs: "Lord Kensington and Sir Philip Francis dine with us. Wardle's motion for a new trial against Clarke and the Wrights had taken place the day before in the King's Bench and rule *nisi* granted. . . . Wardle shows me a correspondence between him and Lord Folkestone upon the subject of a communication made to Folkestone by Sir Rd. Phillips for Wardle's use in his legal proceedings which Folkestone had withheld from Wardle and shown to Mrs. Clarke. Folkestone appears to have acted under some blind

attachment to Mrs. Clarke. Wardle had thought at one time of calling him out, but now means to subpoena him on the approaching trial. I must prevent this, if possible; it will produce a quarrel between the two, and do great mischief with the public to have these two who have hitherto been so well together in the same pursuit."

Three days later the scandal and the mystery thicken. "Calcraft, Wardle, and Payne, dine with us. . . . Wardle says he is sure of succeeding both in gaining a new trial against Wright and in his prosecution of Mrs. Clarke and Wright for perjury, and he takes the whole business, as he has done throughout, with the most perfect composure. I can't bring myself to think there is anything bad in him, and I have looked at him in all ways in order to be sure of him. I know he is in distress for money, but all the men from his part of the country dine with him and speak well of him. . . . In his approaching prosecution he means to subpoena the Duke of York and Lord Moira and Lord Chichester about the £10,000 given to Mrs. Clarke for suppressing the publication of the Duke of York's letters to her. Warren has seen these letters: they were laid before him by counsel to advise whether they might be printed with safety to the publisher, and he told me such stuff was never seen. They consist of the Duke of York's observations or information to Mrs. Clarke concerning the Royal Family—his hatred of the Prince of Wales—his jokes about the Queen and the intrigues and accouchement of the Princess—all in the coarsest and most licentious language. What a damnable piece of work the examination of these Lords and Princes will be!"

Once again Professor Clerici's speculations concerning the mystery surrounding the birth of Charlotte face us. If the Duke confided the intimate details of the "secret" to Mrs. Clarke, £10,000 was not too much to pay for the suppression of his letters. The





COLONEL G. L. WARDLE.

From "A Circumstantial Report of the Pension Fund Scandal Enquiry."



matter, of course, is one that must be left where it is ; at the same time the suggestion is not unreasonable that the letters contained something more vitally important than the commonplace story of the Duke's amours or of the Prince's profligacy. All that can be said for certain is that never was there a more complicated web of vice and intrigue than that which Mary Anne Clarke could have unravelled had she chosen to do so.

Probably Creevey could have said more had he liked. What he does say goes a very little way towards elucidating the puzzle. On December 11 he writes: "Folkestone had been induced by Mrs. Clarke to think Wardle was an agent of the Duke of Kent, and in that capacity he had bound himself by promises of great service to her which he had afterwards forfeited. He is now perfectly convinced that the whole of Mrs. Clarke's account to him was a fabrication, and he tells both Wardle and Western and myself that he has a higher opinion of Wardle than ever." Commenting on this, Sir Herbert Maxwell, the editor of "The Creevey Papers," says: "Creevey goes on to state in terms too little equivocal for modern taste that Lord Folkestone admitted that he had a liaison with Mrs. Clarke while she was under the protection of the Duke of York." Was there ever such an imbroglio ?

Referring to this liaison, Creevey records: "This discovery again frightens Western and myself to the greatest degree, considering as we do that should this fact appear upon the trial it will be fatal to Folkestone's character. Folkestone not sensible of this at first, but we frighten him to death by telling him of his danger." How Mary Anne, the artful Circe, must have enjoyed all this fooling !

Creevey's last reference to this stupendous scandal appears two years later. On October 30, 1811, he writes: "As for poor Wardle, he is ruined since I

last mentioned him—ruined by his excessive folly and being so full of himself from his former success, that it was no longer safe to advise him, and so he foundered last session upon a motion about the punishment of some soldiers.”

But when all is said and done, the question remains, Why did Colonel Wardle disturb the hornets' nest? Mrs. Clarke was his indispensable witness, but he did not bring the matter forward out of friendship for the lady, although insinuations were scattered broadcast that such was the case. The gossiping Gronow has a curious story bearing out this theory. According to the industrious *flâneur*, the Colonel was paying a clandestine visit to the lady when a carriage with the royal livery drove up to the door, and the gallant officer was compelled to take refuge under the sofa; but instead of the royal Duke, there appeared one of his aide-de-camps, who entered into conversation in so mysterious a manner as to excite the attention of the gentleman under the sofa and lead him to believe that the sale of a commission was authorised by the Commander-in-Chief; though it afterwards appeared that it was a private arrangement of the unwelcome visitor. At the Horse Guards, Gronow adds, it had often been suspected that there was a mystery connected with commissions that could not be fathomed, as it frequently happened that the list of promotions agreed on was surreptitiously increased by the addition of new names. This was the “crafty handiwork of the accomplished dame, the Duke having employed her as his amanuensis and being accustomed to sign her autograph lists without examination.”

Gronow's story sounds like invention, and another explanation of the mystery is more suggestive of the truth. Sir Richard Phillips (mentioned in one of the quotations from Creevey), the Radical bookseller who had advanced Mrs. Clarke money to enable her to publish her “Memoirs,” used to tell his friends that the

exposure originated in the resentment of a man named M'Cullum against Sir Thomas Picton, who as Governor of Trinidad had, among other arbitrary acts, imprisoned M'Cullum in an underground prison. On getting to England, M'Cullum sought justice; but finding himself baffled, he first published his travels in Trinidad to expose Picton, then ferreted out charges against the War Office, and at last through Colonel Wardle brought forward the notorious great-coat scandal contract. This being negatived by a Ministerial majority, he then traced Mrs. Clarke and arranged the whole of the exposure for Wardle and others. To effect this in the teeth of power, though destitute of resources, he toiled night and day for months. He lodged in a garret in Hungerford Market, and often did not taste food for twenty-four hours. He lived to see the Duke resign his office, had time to publish a short narrative, then died of exhaustion and want.

There is yet another possible explanation. Mrs. Clarke was not only pretty and fascinating, but she also was exceedingly shrewd, and she doubtless fully appreciated the value of advertisement. She had a grievance against the Duke for his mean and paltry behaviour towards her, and in supplying Colonel Wardle with the material of which he made such good use she had a double object in view—revenge on the Duke and a preliminary puff for her contemplated book of spicy revelations. After the inquiry was closed the publication of her "Memoirs" was announced, and the Duke and his friends were thrown into so intense a state of alarm that, as previously mentioned, they bought up the copies for the sum of £10,000 and had them burnt at a printer's in Salisbury Square. An annuity was also promised her on condition that she should quit England and reside wherever she chose on the Continent. It has been asserted that this annuity was never paid, but however this may be, there is no doubt she went to live in Brussels,

where, her previous history being unknown, she was well received, and she married her daughters without any inquiries as to the fathers to whom she might ascribe them.

Eventually the lady settled in Paris, receiving occasionally visits from members of the aristocracy who had known her when mingling in a certain circle in London. The Marquis of Londonderry never failed to pay his respects to her, entertaining a very high idea of her talents. "Her manners," says Gronow, "were exceedingly agreeable, and to the latest day she retained pleasing traces of past beauty. She was lively, sprightly, and full of fun, and indulged in innumerable anecdotes of the members of the Royal Family of England—some of them much too scandalous to be repeated." Her own opinion of the Duke of York was that he was a big baby not out of his leading-strings, and the Prince of Wales an idle sensualist, with just enough of brains to be guided by any laughing, well-bred individual who would listen to stale jokes and impudent ribaldry. Of Queen Charlotte she used to speak with the utmost disrespect, attributing to her a love of domination, and a hatred of every one who would not bow down before any idol that she chose to set up; and envious of the Princess Caroline and the Princess Charlotte, and jealous of their acquiring too much influence over the Prince of Wales.

It ought not to be left unnoticed that the evidence given before the committee went to show that corrupt traffic in posts was not confined to army commissions, but extended to appointments in the Church. Nor did the abuse stop here. In that notorious book the "Secret History of the Court of England" is a curious accusation against Queen Charlotte. After asserting that the Queen had made £400,000 on the Stock Exchange by acting on her secret sources of information, the writer goes on to say :

“At the same period Her Majesty had another speculation in hand—namely, the profits arising from the sale of cadetships for the East Indies. Dr. Randolph and Lady Jersey were the chief managers of these affairs, though Her Majesty received the largest portion of the spoil. Dr. Randolph himself acknowledged that the Queen had realised £70,000 in this traffic alone. In one transaction an enormous premium was required, and the applicant was very much incensed. He expostulated, but Dr. Randolph made short work of the affair by refusing any further communication on the subject. . . . The affair was subsequently made known to the Queen's youngest son, and by him the Queen was fully acquainted with the probability of public exposure. . . . The Duke was unremitting in his exertions to obtain a settlement of this nefarious affair, and £20,000 was actually paid for the correspondence, and £2,000 given by the Queen (through the medium of the Duke) to the person who effected the business under the provision “that that business might never transpire to the public.”

There may not be a word of truth in this story, but the times were venal, the sense of honour blunted, where money was concerned rapacity knew no bounds, and anything sordid was possible, even in the highest ranks. But for this amazingly low state of morals, the Prince of Wales could hardly have been so indifferent to public opinion as regards his own manner of life and his treatment of his wife and the Princess Charlotte.

It may be added that the satirist published two coarse cartoons on the Clarke scandal, and asserted that the hush-money paid to the lady came out of the pockets of those who would have figured in the suppressed “Memoirs,” and that the negotiation was managed by Lord Folkestone.

## CHAPTER XII

1810

The disagreeable Duke of Cumberland—His unpopularity—The mystery of Sellis, the Duke's valet—The story related—Was it murder or suicide?—An eminent surgeon's opinion—The Duke of Kent's indignation—The surgeon chastised—Mrs. Crawford's denunciation of the Duke of Cumberland—The King's daughters.

THE Duke of Cumberland was the cleverest of Charlotte's uncles, but he was also the black sheep of the Royal Family. He was as repellent in appearance as he was unpleasant in his disposition. Stockmar describes him as "a tall, powerful man with a hideous face; can't see two inches before him; one eye turned quite out of its place." He was a source of trouble to his father; he was shunned by the other dukes; and the only members of the family who cared for him were the Regent, over whom he had great influence, and his sister the Princess Elizabeth. He was, Mr. Childe-Pemberton tells us, "disagreeable to his sister Amelia, as indeed he was to most people." Elizabeth was not unlike him, for she was "rough and bad-tempered, though not ill-natured, and her unrefined taunts and jokes caused her sensitive sister [Amelia] acute distress. In the family squabbles she sided with Ernest, her favourite brother."

Of all the royal brothers, Ernest was the one most hated by the public, and that hatred reached a climax in 1810, when the mysterious tragedy of St. James's Palace startled all London. The sinister story is clouded with contradictions and surmises, and the



absence of any direct evidence to establish motives baffles speculation. All that one can do is to let the narrative, as it was presented to the public at the time, speak for itself.

On the night of May 3 Joseph Sellis, an Italian, and one of the principal valets of the Duke of Cumberland, arranged to sleep in the ducal suite, in consequence of the illness of one of his children. The valets, of whom there were three, were not regularly lodged in the Duke's quarters, only the one on duty (on this particular night it was Neale, an Englishman) sleeping there as a rule.

Sellis, after supping with his wife, when nothing unusual about him was observable, bade her good-night, and set off for the Duke's apartments, a rambling suite of rooms, through six of which Sellis would have to pass before reaching his own. The Duke retired to bed about midnight. The valet-in-waiting (Neale) slept in a room really adjoining the Duke's, but communication could only be made in a somewhat round-about way, by going through a passage which had three doors.

About three o'clock the porter, who was dozing on his chair on the ground-floor, was aroused by feeling himself violently shaken. He saw Neale, the valet, standing by his chair, pale and trembling. He was only half dressed.

"Get up, Smith!" cried Neale agitatedly. "His Royal Highness is murdered!"

At this startling announcement Smith, the porter, leaped from his chair, and when his senses were collected he saw, in addition to Neale, who held in his hand a sabre, from which the blood was dripping, the Duke in his shirt, and apparently terribly wounded. In spite of his hurts, the Duke managed to issue orders that the doors of the palace should be guarded, and no one permitted to go out. The Duke then, leaning on Neale's arm, returned to his rooms.

“Where is Sellis?” he asked, as he went along.  
“Call him at once.”

Some of the servants ran to the door of the valet’s room, and hammered at the panels.

“Sellis, the Duke is murdered!” they shouted.  
But no answer was returned.

To get to the rooms occupied by Sellis’s family, they had to go outside the palace and re-enter by another door. There was a passage of communication, but across this was a baize door always kept locked, and of this door only Sellis and the Duke’s house-keeper had keys.

When the servants reached Mrs. Sellis’s rooms, one of the children said her father was in the Duke’s apartments, he having arranged to sleep there that night, in order to attend His Royal Highness early to Windsor. Hearing this, they went back to Sellis’s room, and knocked again, but all was silent. Traversing several rooms—the plan on which St. James’s Palace is built resembles a maze—they approached the chamber once more by another door. As they drew near, they heard a strange gurgling noise, mixed with a moan of agony.

“They have murdered Sellis also!” cried one of the terrified group. “They are still here! Let us get assistance!” And they ran back in affright and called the guard, who entered the apartment armed.

Here they came face to face with an appalling sight. Sellis was lying perfectly straight in bed, the head raised up against the head-board and nearly severed from the body. His hands were lying straight on each side of him, and blood covered the under part of the body. He had on his shirt, waistcoat, breeches, and stockings. The insides of his hands were perfectly clean, but on the backs were smears of blood. His watch was hanging over his head, wound up; his coat was carefully folded inside-out, and laid over

the back of a chair. The wash-basin was in the stand, and was half full of bloody water.

There were other remarkable circumstances. One was that the razor, covered with blood, with which the deed was presumably done, was lying on the floor about two yards from the bed, and too far off to have been thrown by Sellis after the act, as death must have been immediate. Another puzzle was that his cravat, which was not round his neck, was found to be cut, and cut also was the padding, covered with silk and quilted, which he usually wore underneath the cravat. It was as if some person had made an attempt to cut the throat with the cravat on, and finding the wool or cotton of the padding impeding the razor, took the cravat off in order to effect the purpose more readily.

The Duke's version of the affair was this. He had been suddenly awakened by the sensation as if being struck by a bat, or something similar, on the head. His bed was in an alcove, and there was no alternative but to rush upon his assailant. He defended himself with his naked hands; but his sight not being good, and the room being nearly dark, as there was only a small lamp burning at a distance on the hearth, and behind a horse on which clothes were hanging, he could distinguish little but flashes and gleams. In his exertions to defend himself he once caught the sabre, with which, it turned out, the assassin was armed, and his hand was severely cut. He was gashed on the left wrist, on the back of the right hand, and received three wounds in the neck, five on his right hand, one on his left arm, one on his left wrist, one on his leg, and one on his thigh.

While the Duke was turning to the door which opened into a passage leading to Neale's room, and calling for assistance, the assassin made a last cut at him. This blow first wounded His Royal Highness in the thigh, and, after wounding him, cut a piece out of the door, by which the sabre was bent. The

curvature of the sabre fitted exactly into the incision in the door, and, as it was the point of the sabre that was bent, it is possible this last effort was a thrust and not a cut.

The Duke, having opened the doors, called Neale, and the assassin, becoming alarmed, fled for safety. Neale joined the Duke instantly, and entering with His Royal Highness into the bedchamber, he perceived the sole door of communication between the Duke's chamber and the other part of the palace was open, and exclaimed, "The assassins are still in the apartments!"

Rushing to the fireplace, Neale seized the poker; then, advancing towards the open door to pursue the murderer, he trod upon the naked sabre, which the assassin had cast from him in his flight. Neale snatched it up to pursue the murderer; but the effusion of blood from the Duke's wounds became so vast as to make it necessary to call for instant assistance and to rouse the servants. Accordingly, as already described, he went in search of the porter.

A significant discovery—which, however, did little to elucidate the mystery—was that in a sort of ante-room opening from the Duke's bedroom were found a pair of slippers and a dark lantern. The slippers were marked inside by the letter "S," while the dark lantern had been seen, so one witness stated at the inquest, in the possession of Sellis.

Whether right or wrong, the inference was that Sellis had been the assailant, that he had concealed himself in a press in the anteroom; and that, failing in his attempt to assassinate the Duke, he had fled to his own room, and in despair had committed suicide by cutting his throat.

So at least the coroner's jury determined, but there were reasons why their verdict of *felo-de-se* was not wholly convincing. Nor was the way the proceedings were carried out altogether satisfactory, as the

coroner examined the witnesses privately, and only the depositions were read to the jury. The latter had therefore no opportunity of seeing the witnesses and questioning them, nor could they be sure that the whole of the evidence given was in the depositions. Some of the facts did not quite fit in with the theory of suicide. For instance, the weapon with which the Duke had been attacked was his own regimental sabre, which had been lying about, and the natural inference is that, if Sellis intended to murder the Duke, it was strange he did not provide himself with a weapon, instead of trusting to chance. On the other hand, if his motive was robbery, why did he not appropriate the valuables without waking the Duke? It was strange also that the Duke did not recognise his assailant, and still stranger that, so severely wounded as he was said to be, the Duke could yet go down to the hall, a journey of considerable distance.

The apparent absence of motive, either for suicide or murder, makes the affair as inexplicable as any of the unsolved mysteries to be found in the annals of crime. It has been asserted the Duke was carrying on an intrigue with Sellis's wife, but there is not the slightest proof of this. That Sellis was on bad terms with Neale is, however, certain. There was also medical evidence which did not quite tally with that of Sir Henry Halford (the friend of the Royal Family) and Mr. Everard Home, the surgeon called in. This evidence was that of Mr. Carpue, a well-known surgeon, who saw the body; but Mr. Carpue, for some reason, was not called by the coroner. What this evidence would have been one can gather from a passage in the Rev. Erskine Neale's "Life of the Duke of Kent."

"Mr. C[arpue], a surgeon of note, saw Sellis after his death, and having examined his wounds, gave it as his opinion that the cuts on the back of the neck could not have been inflicted by the deceased. Nor was Mr. C—— content with simply giving utterance to

this monstrous [*sic*] assertion, but had the hardihood to make the subject the basis of a lecture to his pupils, in the course of which he declared that if Sellis died by his own hand, he did not cut the wound at the back of his neck. 'Sellis,' he observed, 'had not one but several wounds on the back of his neck. If Sellis had meant his own decollation, he must have begun behind his neck; but labour with the razor as he might, it would only hack and hew his flesh, for no physical strength would be sufficient to terminate the existence of an individual by beheading himself.'"

From this it is pretty clear why Mr. Carpue was not called to give evidence. Allowing that he described what he saw, his deductions are perfectly sound. However, the lecture gave great offence, as might be expected. The worthy Neale goes on to say: "A more mischievous lecture tending to the most mendacious and flagitious inferences was never delivered. The Duke of Kent heard of this address, and was justifiably indignant at its tenour. That he took care should very speedily reach the ears of the Prince of Wales, in whose household the offender, strangely enough, had some appointment. Soon afterwards meeting the lecturer, whom he had been previously in the habit of greeting with great courtesy, the Duke looked him fairly down, and then *rumped* him without mercy." Brotherly love indeed!

All the efforts to settle the case as one of suicide did not stifle public curiosity and comment; but at last the matter died out, only to be revived twenty years after, when an article, purporting to be a narrative of the real facts, was published.

The writer of this insinuated that there was a motive why the Duke and Neale should wish to get rid of Sellis, and, as it was impossible to remain quiescent under the accusation, the Duke took proceedings, and a verdict of guilty was returned. The article and the accusation were undoubtedly libellous, and the

mystery remained as impenetrable as ever, and has continued to be so up to the present time. Whatever may be the real story, the affair at the time increased the odium the Duke of Cumberland had already incurred.

Crevevey, in the spring of the following year, has a reference to the attitude observed towards the Duke by his friends. "We were at the Pavilion," he writes, "last night. . . . About half-past nine . . . the Prince came out of the dining-room. He was in his best humour, bowed and spoke to all of us, and looked uncommonly well tho' very fat. He was in full Field Marshal's uniform. He remained quite as cheerful and full of fun to the last—half-past twelve. . . . The Duke of Cumberland was in the regimentals of his own Hussars, looking really hideous—everybody trying to be rude to him—not standing when he came near to them. The officers of the Prince's regiment had all dined with him, and looked very ornamental monkeys in their red breeches with gold fringe and yellow boots." The Duke of Cumberland's Hussars, it may be mentioned, behaved disgracefully at the battle of Waterloo, galloping off the field panic-stricken early in the day. The Duke of Cumberland became King of Hanover, and it is only fair to say that as a monarch his conduct gave rise to no complaint—indeed, he appears to have been popular.

The fact, however, remains that few writers on the lives of the sons of George III. have a good word for His Royal Highness, so far as his career in England is concerned. Mrs. Crawford, who refers to him in her "Victoria, Queen and Ruler," is pointedly severe. "There was a dread," she writes, "among all who wished for a better England (and hard times were increasing this class) of the Duke of Cumberland ascending the throne. He was at once a bad man and a bad fellow, and debauchee and a ruffian. The

active principle of his being was malevolence. He gave a constant example of that form of wickedness which the Germans call *Schadenfreude*, or happiness at witnessing the misery of another person. His brother Clarence said, 'He is not a bad sort. Only if he knows where you have a tender spot on your foot, he likes to tread on it.'

"Daring and able, his wickedness and power to do harm might have been terrible were he to mount the throne. Even without that, his influence was considerable. He was a favourite brother of the Prince Regent, was 'Orange King,' that is to say, grand master of all the Orange Lodges in Ireland and Canada, had the ultra-Tories and ultra-Protestants behind him, and had been the Cabinet-maker since 1821. That delightful and able historian, Mr. Justin McCarthy, is hard on Tiberius when he compares the Duke of Cumberland to him. Tiberius was a very good man before he suffered the loss of a beloved wife. There was never any good in the Duke of Cumberland, unless it were the coarse, slashing, dashing ruthless bravery of the German Ritter, who hired himself out for pay."

King George was more fortunate with his daughters than with his sons. There was, it is true, a sinister story in connection with Princess Sophia, which will be dealt with in its proper place; but she was far more sinned against than sinning. The love-romance of Princess Amelia was pitiful indeed, but her father had no share in regard to the disappointment which broke her heart. The Princess Royal, who married the King of Würtemberg, caused him no trouble; Princess Elizabeth's sole drawback was a certain waywardness of temper; Princess Mary was amiable and good hearted; Princess Sophia's nature was charming and lovable; and Princess Augusta was all that a daughter should be. During the time of the King's final attack before he was placed under confinement Augusta was devoted in her attention to him.



Princess Charlotte's favourite aunt was Princess Mary, whose lively disposition was akin to her own, but she was also partial to the good-natured and sensible Augusta. Augusta was the only sister in whom Amelia confided throughout her love-affair with General Fitzroy, which had so sad an ending.

Towards the end of the following letter (the original is in Mr. A. M. Broadley's collection), the Princess Elizabeth, writing to her niece the Princess Charlotte, makes reference to the Princess Amelia.

“MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

“On Sunday I received your very kind letter, and wish I had time to send you some more Dogs, but I am just now hard at work finishing a great undertaking, so that must plead my excuse. However, one couple shall proceed with speed, though those I cannot promise so soon for the pattern has not been sent me. The moment it is it shall be done. We are to-day to part with Lady Harrington, who has been with us a month, and has made herself very pleasant and good-humoured. She has had her two youngest daughters here, who are delightful girls, very natural, very unaffected, and extremely well informed. Charlotte Augusta is to be presented next spring. Lady Ilchester has been making a tour with her boys, and returned yesterday. Excepting these ladies we have nobody, for the Harcourts are gone to Nuneham and the Fremantles to the Isle of Wight. I am delighted with the thought of having your *phiz*, as you call it, for I love you dearly. I am sorry that you have lost Sir Abraham and that *others* who have joined you are not so agreeable. ‘Sir Abraham’ was a pleasant book, which you could always refer to, and reap advantage from, ‘New-comers’ an insipid novel which one does not wish to go further on than the first volume and then is thrown aside. You tell me you never show my letters, so I write without fear to you. This

you understand is quite for yourself. *Mais le sage entend á demi mot.* Dear Lady Arran will always be a pleasant companion for you, for she has a very strong mind, and no pretence whatsoever, and I am certain that you will enjoy society, for they are good and worthy people.

“Next Monday I am to see Miss Gale, who is to bring me an amber inkstand (?) which poor Lady Elgin left me. When I have seen her I will write to you again. You may have heard Lord Elgin is going to be married to Miss Eliza Oswald, who by all accounts is a very superior young woman. She will be a treasure to his child and I trust in God that it may not turn out as the last, indeed she bears so excellent a character that as far as appearance goes it promises well. Lady Charlotte Durham wrote me a beautiful letter upon the subject. Tell Lady Arran that I have just received her letter and I will write to her in a day or two. The Lobsters were excellent. The Queen has had some for dinner and supped upon them to-night. As I cannot send you the dogs yet I will send you a bear. The ribbon which is at the back, you are to put your two forefingers into it and put on the stockings. After your precious fingers are there, sing Delcaros Hornpipe, and he will dance for hours unless his legs tire, then lay him by for a while. Take care Miss Tyrrell do not fall in love with him. Tell Lady De with my kind complement that poor Mrs. Egerton comes to Windsor to-morrow. She has been shockingly ill. Amelia suffers much from St. Anthony’s fire, but is better to-day. Yours affectionately,

“ELIZABETH.”

This letter is dated September 12, 1810, and in October the poor Princess’s recovery was regarded as hopeless, so much so that the fashionable people in Bath began to order mourning. She died during the following month.



ERNEST AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.  
From an engraving by H. R. Cook after G. L. Saunders.



## CHAPTER XIII

1811

The King's insanity incurable—The Prince made Regent—The Princess Charlotte kept in seclusion—Possible reasons for the Prince's restrictions—Charlotte sent to Windsor—Dislike of the Queen—The dull life of the Court—The Regent's frivolous amusements—Trousers *v.* pantaloons; hoops at Court functions—The Regency fête at Carlton House—Charlotte's disappointment—The Regent's discourtesy to Mrs. Fitzherbert—Princess Caroline and Miss Berry.

THE year 1811 was ushered in with a melancholy announcement which had been foreseen, but which nevertheless came upon the nation as a shock. Though it was hoped the King would regain his mental strength, his condition at this time was such as to make it impossible for him to act in any responsible capacity, and on February 5 the Regency Bill was passed.

The insanity of the poor King was not a matter for surprise to those who knew the circumstances. He had had domestic trouble enough to cloud what little clearness of intellect he possessed. The disgraceful life of the heir to the throne, the never-ceasing dissensions arising out of the Prince's unfortunate marriage, must alone have caused the old man, now past seventy, constant worry and anxiety. The scandal of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke was another bitter experience; the dark rumours surrounding the name of the Duke of Cumberland were even more poignant sources of misery; and lastly came the crowning sorrow—the death of his favourite daughter, Amelia.

The result of the Regency Act was to give the Prince of Wales as Prince Regent uncontrolled power so far as his wife and daughter were concerned, and the little satisfaction they had hitherto derived from their limited intercourse was soon to become less. The visits which Charlotte had hitherto been permitted to pay her mother at Kensington were still more restricted, and Queen Charlotte supported her son in his plan of retaining the young Princess at Windsor.

Lady Rose Weigall speaks very plainly on the motives of this "pernicious" policy which was to keep the young Princess secluded from the world. "The Regent had reason to fear that her appearance in public would give a fresh stimulus to the widespread feeling in favour of herself and her mother and render him proportionately more unpopular. He was further bent upon avoiding everything which could look like a recognition of her as the heir presumptive to the Crown, probably hoping that by the death of his wife or by a divorce he might hereafter have a son through a second marriage and shut out the daughter of his detested consort from the throne. Joined to the motives of the Regent there was the dread with the Queen that if the Princess Charlotte was allowed to resume her rightful place, she would disparage by her example the manners and morals which had been enforced at the virtuous but prim, austere Court of her grandmother. For these reasons the Princess Charlotte was regarded as a rival to be suppressed rather than as a future sovereign who was to be trained for her imperial office."

Lady Rose Weigall's arguments are just, but the question remains, Do they go far enough? Was there another reason lurking in the background of the dark intrigue to prevent the Princess Charlotte from ascending the throne? If there be any foundation for the mystery in regard to her birth, the possibilities hinted at by Clerici could hardly have been unknown

to Queen Charlotte, "small and crooked, with a true Mulatto face," as Stockmar describes her. The Queen's hatred of Caroline was undisguised, and that she did not scruple to descend to base manœuvres to injure her hapless daughter-in-law is seen in her employment of Lady Jersey in the early days of Caroline's married life. Now that the poor King was safely out of the way there was nothing to prevent mother and son carrying out their design to separate mother and daughter.

The first step towards this end was to immure the Princess Charlotte within the precincts of Windsor Castle, where she would be under the Queen's eye. If the public could only be made indifferent to the girl's existence, so much the better. Already the Princess's growing popularity was a cause of offence, and it was very evident that if she had once a chance to endear herself to the nation she would do so thoroughly, for she had all the qualities which go to make up an idol of the people. The task of controlling so turbulent a spirit must have been perfectly evident to both the Queen and her son, and most important was it that the girl should have no support from her mother. Charlotte was now turned fifteen, precocious for her age, and she was fully alive to what was due to her position and to the determination of her father to ignore the fact that she was in near succession to the crown. Though in her heart she rebelled, outwardly she showed no opposition. She went to Windsor and tried to endure the boredom of a humdrum life so foreign to her nature. The Court of Queen Charlotte was much the same in 1811 as it was a quarter of a century before, when it was described by a satirist, believed to be Lyttelton, whose words are quoted by Leigh Hunt in his "Old Court Suburb."

"To make up at least two Court suits in a year," we read; "to dance as many Court minuets in the same space; to sidle on days of state through the presence-

chamber at the tail of a long procession ; to take her place in an established corner of the drawing-room ; to say ' Yes, sir,' or ' No, sir,' and curtsy when she is noticed by the King ; to say, ' Yes, madam,' or ' No, madam,' and curtsy when the Queen does her the same honour ; to make an occasional one of six large hoops in a royal coach and to aid the languor of an easy party in a side box at a royal play, compose the principal labours of a maid-of-honour's life.

" But they are not without their rewards. A moderate salary and a thousand pounds when Miss gets a husband ; an apartment in a palace, and I believe a dinner from a royal kitchen ; in a rotation of six weeks, a seven days' possession of a royal coach, a royal coachman and a shabby pair of horses for the purpose of shopping in the city and paying distant visits ; airings in the King's Road and the being set down at the very gate of Kensington Gardens while women of the first fashion are obliged to trip it o'er an hundred yards of green-sward between their coaches and the place of admittance ; to take place of Baronets' daughters ; to go to plays, operas, and oratorios gratis, to have physicians without fees, and medicines without the apothecaries' bills ; to chat with Lords and Grooms of the Bed-chamber around the fire of an ante-chamber ; to stroke the beardless face of a newly-made page ; to receive an Heir-Apparent's first effort at flirtation, constitute the various privileges of a Maid-of-Honour."

The writer is equally caustic in his remarks concerning Ladies-in-Waiting. " A Lady of the Bed-chamber is obliged," he says, " only to do partial duty ; and during the short period of her attendance is in some degree the companion of her royal mistress ; while the Virgins-of-Honour are not admitted, as I have been informed, to stick a pin in a royal handkerchief. Even the Women of the same department figure only



in Her Majesty's cast-off gowns on royal birthdays ; but these poor persecuted damsels are the common hackneys of drawing-room parade : whether ill or well, in humour or out of humour, by daylight or by candle-light, they are obliged through three parts of the year to be on the continual stretch of state exhibition. I remember when I was little more than a boy to have seen a young lady in training for this important office ; and the whole of that serious business consisted in nothing more than a practical lecture upon entrances and exits, the language of courtesies, and the art of conducting a large hoop in all modes and forms of pliancy."

The home life of Queen Charlotte was as domestic and prosaic as it could well be. Mrs. Papendieck lets us see what it was like in the later part of the eighteenth century, and the Hon. Amelia Murray gives one or two interesting reminiscences of the routine observed at the time Charlotte was installed at the Castle. "At Windsor Castle in those days," she writes, "luncheon was not as now a general meal. Each lady had a chicken, a plate of fruit, and a bottle of 'King's cup' (the peel of a lemon put to soak for some hours in cold water and sweetened with sugar—it was the King's own beverage) brought to her room, every day the same. We young ones highly approved this custom, but when I call to mind the system of fees and the perquisites obtained—customs which probably had grown up by degrees and were perhaps relics of ancient times—I feel that the abolition of them was a great boon."

The servants of the great houses nowadays expect, and no doubt get, plenty of tips, but tips are nothing like what they were a hundred years ago. Old customs appear to have been maintained for no other purpose than to serve as an excuse for perquisites. "On all high saints' days," Miss Murray goes on to say, "a tinsel cross of divers colours was placed on the ladies'

tables or sent to their residences, and a guinea was understood to be due in return. A bottle of wine every two days and unnecessary wax candles were the perquisites of the ladies' maids. Candles were extinguished as soon as lighted, to be carried off by servants; pages were seen marching out before the Royal Family with a bottle of wine sticking out of each pocket, and a set page called regularly upon each person who attended a Drawing-room with his book to receive the customary gratuity."

Gronow says that if one dined at any of the great houses in London it was considered absolutely necessary to give a guinea to the butler on leaving the house. The practice was of ancient date, for it is said that Pope, when he dined with the Duke of Montagu, finding he had to give five guineas to the numerous servants at Montagu House, told the Duke that he could not dine with him in future unless his Grace sent him five guineas to distribute among his myrmidons. And ever after, when the Duke invited the poet, he sent with the invitation an order for the tribute-money, preferring to do this rather than break a custom which had grown to be looked upon by servants as their right.

Sometimes, Lady Amelia Murray tells us, the Queen indulged in reminiscences. One day she said, "The young people did not like me because I was not pretty; but the King was fond of driving a phaeton in those days, and once he overturned me in a turnip field and that fall broke my nose. I think I was not so ugly after dat!" Apparently "good Queen Charlotte" was not deficient in a kind of dry humour.

On another occasion she said: "Lady Henderland was one of my ladies. She was left to sit with me in the evening when the King went to business at nine o'clock. I sat and the good lady sat, and we both got very tired. At last Lady Henderland said: 'Perhaps your Majesty is not aware that I must wait until your

Majesty dismisses me.' 'Oh, good my Lady,' I said, 'why did you not tell me dat before?'"

When the King went into Kent to review the volunteers in Lord Romney's park, the Queen accompanied him, and an episode occurred which amused her mightily. Though it told against herself, she was fond of relating it. "I was in the tent," she said; "there was a sentinel, but I suppose he was looking at something else; so an old Kentish woman in a red cloak made her way in and she stood staring at me with her arms akimbo. At last she said: 'Well, she's not so ugly as they told me!' 'Well, my good woman,' I replied, 'I am glad of dat.'" Whatever faults Charlotte had, she was certainly not vain.

Queen Charlotte was so fond of snuff that she was the principal cause of making it fashionable. "I recollect," Gronow tells us, "having seen her Majesty on the terrace at Windsor, walking with the King, when, to the great delight of the Eton boys, she applied her finger and thumb to her gold box, out of which her Majesty appeared to have fished a considerable quantity, for the royal nose was covered with snuff both within and without."

Meanwhile, the accession of the Prince of Wales to the Regency showed that he was indifferent to everything but his own pleasures and the gratification of his vanity. "The cut of the coat became of greater consequence than the amelioration of the condition of Ireland, and the tie of the neckcloth an object of greater importance than Parliamentary Reform, or adjustment of the disputes with America."

Huish has an amusing note throwing light on the occupations of the Prince Regent at this period. He says: "We can state it as a fact that a council was held once in Carlton Palace on the subject of trousers and pantaloons, at which a certain Marchioness presided, assisted by other ladies, whose experience in matters of that sort was never questioned by any one. The

knotty point to be determined was (and it was agreed upon *una voce*) that there was an indelicacy attached to the pantaloon from which the trouser was in a great degree exempt. The decision of the ladies in the favour of the trouser was submitted to the approbation of the Prince Regent, who, from a knowledge of the anatomical perfection of his form, requested the ladies to reverse their decision, but contra the ladies declared it had been formed after the most mature deliberation and the closest inspection of the respective advantages and defects of the two modes of dress. The Prince, therefore, yielded, and from that moment the use of the pantaloon was prohibited at Carlton Palace, and consequently wherever fashion was supposed to predominate.

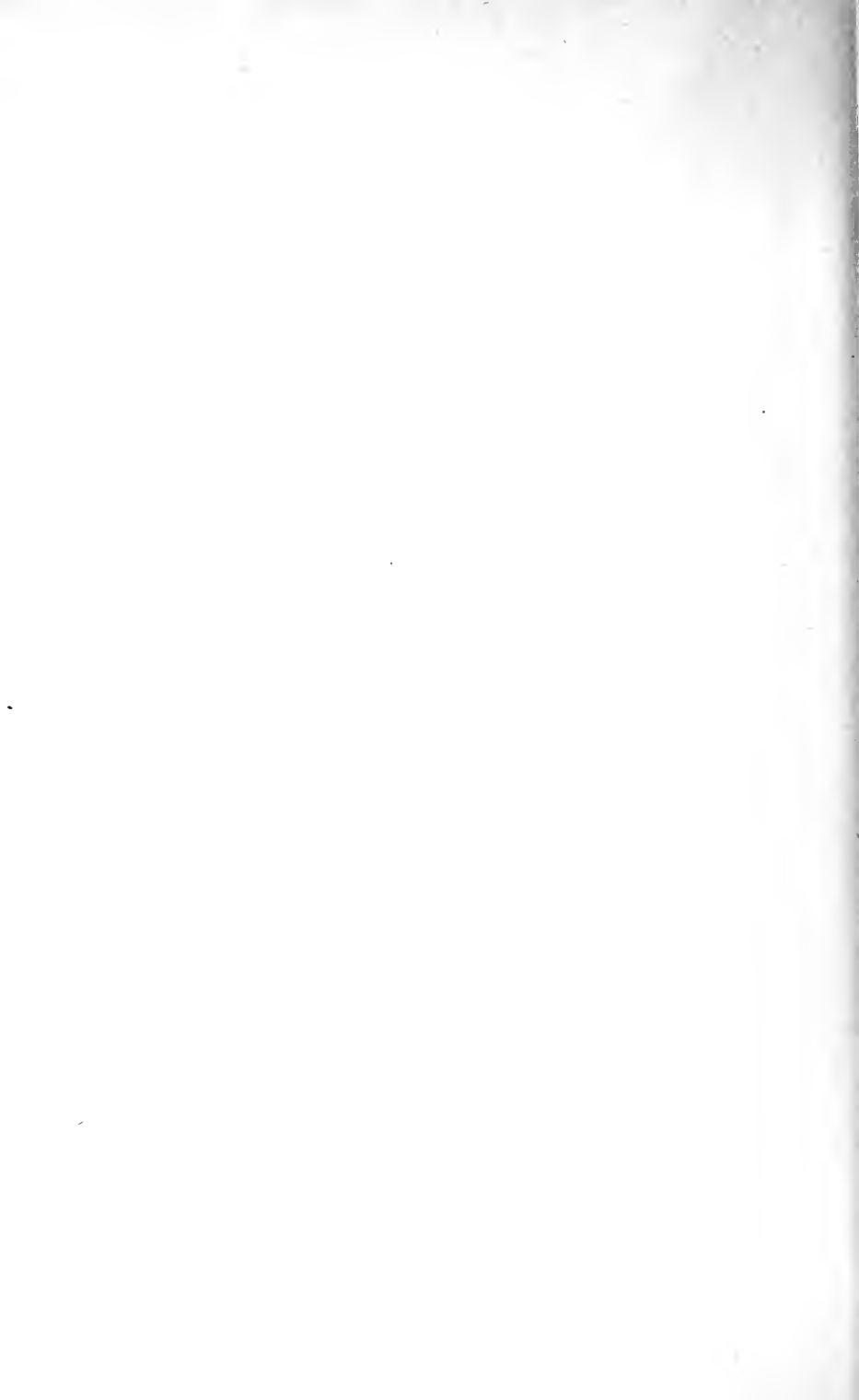
“Fashion has produced strange monstrosities in its time, but perhaps no place could be mentioned from which a greater number have issued than Carlton Palace. Lord Spencer showed his knowledge of the frivolity of human character when he cut off the skirts of his coat, and declared that there was nothing too ridiculous which would not be followed by the crowd, if any celebrated individual set the example; and on this head the obligations which the world of fashion owes to the Prince of Wales have been acknowledged by far more sapient heads than ours. We throw no sneers upon hereditary maladies—they belong to the infirmities of our nature; but a malady hereditary in the Royal Family of England was the cause of the introduction of the stiff starched shirt collar projecting on each side of the face like a pig’s ear, and which has been found exceedingly convenient to those who can afford to buy a collar and not a shirt.”

It was not until the end of the Regency that the hoop disappeared from its last stronghold, the Court. The Prince, observes Leigh Hunt, liked to contemplate the shapes of the ladies, though he had now become



THE PRINCE REGENT AS COLONEL OF THE 10TH HUSSARS.

From an engraving by A. Cardon after Harlowe.



willing enough to disguise his own in stays and trousers. When Lady Georgiana Lennox (afterwards Lady de Ros) first went to Court, the hoop was still worn, and she relates in her *Reminiscences* that just as she was approaching the Queen, she found herself seized by Princess Charlotte, who turned her hoop round, telling her "it was all wrong!"—an unceremonious act of good nature one might expect from the impulsive young lady.

Hoops at Court continued to be *de rigueur* as late as 1818, and we read in an account given by Mr. Rush, who was present at a Royal Drawing-room in that year, how "the hoop dresses of the ladies sparkling with lama; their plumes, their lappets, the fanciful attitudes which the hoops occasioned, some getting out of position as when in Addison's time they were adjusted to shoot a door; the various costumes of the gentlemen as they stood pinioning their elbows, and holding in their swords; the common hilarity from the common dilemma; the bland recognitions passing between those above and below, made up, altogether, an exhibition so picturesque that a painter might give it as illustrative so far of the Court of that era." The ascent of the grand staircase at these functions was no easy task. Mr. Rush tells that it took the party he was accompanying three-quarters of an hour to reach the summit.

Pantaloons struggled for existence as strenuously as the hoop, and for some years after the Prince had decided that trousers should be the fashion, the lady autocrats of Almacks ordained that no gentleman wearing trousers should be admitted to their exclusive assemblies. The Duke of Wellington, who chanced to present himself in the prohibited garments, met with a defeat such as he had never experienced on the battlefield; and what was still more remarkable, he accepted that defeat quite cheerfully, and, bowing to the feminine decree, retired without a word.

In strong contrast with the Prince's preciseness in regard to dress was his carelessness in other respects. The Duke of Wellington, talking to Lady de Ros in 1836, told her that George IV., from the time he was quite a young man, had been in the habit of carrying about him a sort of wallet pocket-book, into which he used to put money, letters, trinkets, miniatures, and any of the numerous fans, odd gloves, locks of hair, and similar keepsakes which he was always adding to his stock from all quarters. As soon as his pocket-book became full, he used to put it away in a drawer without ever troubling himself to examine its contents or take out whatever money it might contain. Whenever he discarded a full pocket-book, he took another to replace it from a great stock of new ones he kept by him, and this, as soon as filled, was laid by and replaced in like manner.

At the time of his death it devolved upon the Duke and another to examine the personal effects of the King, and accordingly they had to look over the contents of a whole chest of drawers entirely filled and stowed away by the King from the time he was a young man. "When the Duke first looked at one of them, and found the toys it contained, he was about to have the whole stock burnt; but some money accidentally fell out, which led to a careful scrutiny of others, and they actually collected in various sums no less than £10,000 from these pocket-books, after which they caused them to be destroyed with their less important contents."

Soon after the Regency Bill became law the Prince's habits changed noticeably and for the worse. He was no longer so notorious for his amours as for his love of the bottle. Miss Berry, writing on May 22, 1811, says: "Went about eleven to Lady Hertford's. We did not get there till near twelve, when the Regent had not arrived from dinner at Lord Cholmondeley's. He came soon afterwards, while we were in the outer



room, and we saw the whole ceremony. A circle was immediately made, and the Regent, the Dukes of Clarence, Cumberland, Cambridge, and Gloucester, were all in it at the same time. The Regent looked wretchedly swollen up, with a muddled complexion, and was besides extremely tipsy—gravely and cautiously so. I happened to be a good while in the circle; and at last he gave me a formal grave bow with *Kensington* legible on it. In general he speaks much less, both to men and women, than he did—it is the fashion of the day with him.” The picture presented by the “First Gentleman of Europe” could not have been a very pleasant sight for Lady Hertford, who at one time had rivalled Mrs. Fitzherbert in the affections of the Royal Don Juan.

The Prince could do nothing without display, and his determination to celebrate the inauguration of the Regency by a colossal fête at Carlton House was quite in keeping with this phase of his character. It was of no importance to him that rejoicings at such a moment were in the worst taste possible, and that virtually he would be merry-making because the insanity of the poor old King put him in the position of power; his vanity was overpowering, and he not only decided upon having the festivities, but that they should be on a scale of magnificence beyond everything of the kind that had been seen before.

Naturally enough, when Charlotte heard of the contemplated ball and fête she went wild with excitement, for she had made up her mind that her father would surely like her to be present. She was now no longer a child. She was a woman, as one can well imagine from a description given of her by Lady Charlotte Campbell at this period. We read that “she is grown excessively, and has all the fulness of a person of five-and-twenty. She is neither graceful nor elegant, yet she has a peculiar air *et tous les prestiges de la*

*royauté et du pouvoir.* . . . The Princess Charlotte is above the middle height, extremely spread for her age ; her bosom full but finely shaped ; her shoulders large, and her whole person voluptuous, but of a nature to become soon spoiled, and without much care and exercise she will shortly lose all beauty in fat and clumsiness. Her skin is white, but not a transparent white ; there is little or no shade in her face ; but her features are very fine. Their expression, like that of her general demeanour, is noble. Her feet are rather small, and her hands and arms are finely moulded. She has a hesitation in her speech, amounting almost to a stammer—an additional proof, if any were wanting, of her being her father's own child ; but in every thing she is his very image. Her voice is flexible, and its tones dulcet, except when she laughs ; then it becomes too loud, but is never unmusical. She seems to wish to be admired more as a lovely woman than as a Queen. Yet she has quickness, both of fancy and penetration, and would fain reign despotically, or I am much mistaken."

The last person the Prince wished to see at the ball was his daughter, and Charlotte waited in vain for an invitation. She probably was not aware that there were political considerations which made it desirable she should be absent. On his accession the Prince threw over his Whig friends, who had supported him for so long, and cast in his lot with the Tory ministry of his father. The object of the ball was to proclaim his new policy publicly. The Whig party, angry at the Regent's attitude, took up the cause of the Princess Caroline, and they had a powerful ally at hand in the Princess Charlotte. The knowledge of this made the Prince all the more determined to keep the girl in seclusion.

Charlotte's feelings on the matter can be gathered from the following letter from her to Miss Hayman :

“MY DEAR HAMY,

“But a few lines, as I will write you a longer one soon again, only to tell you that the Prince Regent gives a magnificent ball on the 5th of June. I have not been invited, nor do I know if I shall be or not. If I should not, it will make a great noise in the world, as the friends I have seen have repeated over and over again it is my duty to go there; it is proper that I should. Really I do think it will be very hard if I am not asked. The Duke of Gloucester dined on the 16th at Kensington Palace, and was as usual delightful; he was very kind to me, and talked a great part of the evening to me on the sofa alone; his charming sister was also there, who was as kind to me as possible. In short, there is hardly a moment of my life that I passed so happily as I did the other night. The 17th the Princess was perfectly out of humour and quite snappish; what had happened God only knows.”

It was believed afterwards that the Duke of Gloucester was in love with his cousin and wanted to marry her—hence his long conversation with Charlotte “on the sofa alone.” His sister Sophia Matilda probably was aware of the Prince’s objection to the Duke’s attentions, and no wonder she was out of humour. As for the ball, the Regent had his way, but only by the expedient of banishing Charlotte to the dullness and society of Windsor, and to her grandmother’s Court she went, with a very rueful face.

It was of course inevitable that the Princess of Wales should be excluded from the fête, and no one was surprised at her being ignored. But the treatment Mrs. Fitzherbert received from the man who had over and over again protested he regarded her as his wife was the subject of strong comment.

Mr. W. H. Wilkins relates the story thus: “It was at first said that no one was to be asked under the rank of a peer’s son or daughter, but that limitation gave

offence, and was cancelled. In all, some two thousand invitations were sent out. Mrs. Fitzherbert received an invitation. As this was the first time she was to make a public appearance at the Regent's house since his assumption of the Regency, she was naturally anxious to know how she was to be received. She had no intention of submitting again to the slights which had caused her to absent herself from the Pavilion. She made inquiries in a well-informed quarter, and discovered that there was to be a royal supper-table, accommodating a large number of distinguished guests, including the French Royal Family, those members of the English Royal Family who were present, and persons especially honoured by the Regent, including of course Lord and Lady Hertford and their son Lord Yarmouth.

“To this table Mrs. Fitzherbert was not bidden, and she learned that if she went to Carlton House, she would be left to fight for her supper at a buffet with the general company. The omission was the more marked because on all former occasions, to avoid etiquette, in circumstances of such delicacy as regarded her own position with regard to the Prince, it had been customary to sit at table regardless of rank. This had always secured her a seat at the Prince's table, and she was very tenacious (perhaps unduly so) of this small concession to her peculiar position. The Regent had always promised her that, when he had the power, he would do everything to put her right with the world; but now, so far from doing this, he was even taking away the slight privileges hitherto conceded to her. This change of place she had no difficulty in tracing to Lady Hertford, and she regarded it as ‘a systematic intention to degrade her before the public.’

“Mrs. Fitzherbert would not, however, believe that this humiliation was to be offered to her unless she heard it from the Regent's own lips. With characteristic courage she went to Carlton House, and

demanding of the Regent where she was to sit. He said: 'You know, madame, you have no place.'

"'None, sir,' she replied, 'but such as you choose to give me.'

"Deeply mortified, she withdrew. She determined that she would not go to the fête, and she told those of the Royal Family who were her friends of her determination. The Duke of York and other of the royal brothers endeavoured to get the Regent to alter his arrangement of the table in Mrs. Fitzherbert's favour, but they found him inflexible. He held that the exceptional courtesy the Prince of Wales had extended to her in such matters could not be continued to her by the Regent at his Court. He could no longer waive the rules of precedence in her favour, nor could he set the etiquette of the Court at defiance. He had no wish to exclude her from the fête, but he wished her in future to understand her place. Mrs. Fitzherbert, however, declined to fall in with his arrangements; she held that she occupied a position *sui generis*, and was therefore entitled to exceptional treatment, so under these altered circumstances she declined to attend his Court."

That the Princess of Wales felt her position very keenly at the time of her husband's exaltation is made quite obvious by Miss Berry. Her mind was constantly dwelling on her past life and her bitter experience, as may be seen from the following extract from the Journal under June 9: "Dined with the Princess of Wales at Blackheath. Dining-room *à la Gothique*, very pretty, but the rest of the house in abominable taste. After dinner the Princess walked with me in the garden and fell into talking of her own story, with which she began from her early youth and continued in detail to the epoch of her marriage and in still greater detail since. Every circumstance of the Prince's behaviour to her, at and after their marriage; every circumstance of the contrivances for getting

her out of Carlton House ; his character which she knows perfectly ; the Queen's which she abhors, and whom she believes to be her greatest enemy, her own father's, and mother's, etc., etc. In short, after coming in to get some tea and put on a shawl, she resumed her walk and her talk to me till past one in the morning. Luckily it was the finest moonlight night that ever was."

Miss Berry must have been sympathetic in spite of her prejudice against the Princess, or it may be that she was conquered by the charm which Caroline could exercise when she was in the mood. One of the trials which the friends of the Princess had to endure was to listen to the recital of her woes, which she was never tired of detailing at great length. Later on, when she took to writing letters to the newspapers, Brougham became very uneasy, and wrote to Creevey, begging him to impress upon the Princess's faithful friend, Whitbread, "the fatal effect of any more letters. She will be called," added Brougham, "the Compleat Letter-writer and become generally despised."

Four days after the last entry Miss Berry dined again at the Princess's at Kensington. "After dinner," she says, "the Princess walked out with me on the gravel walk before the windows and resumed the conversation of Blackheath, drawing me into a window and asking me if I had thought upon the conversation we had the other day. I am not altogether so well satisfied with this one as with the other."

This was two days before the fête, and meanwhile all fashionable London was in a flutter of expectation. Fortunately the weather was delightfully fine and nothing happened to mar the brilliancy of the affair. The company began to arrive at nine o'clock, some in carriages, others in Sedan chairs, which had not then gone quite out of use. The invitations were so numer-



THE PRINCE REGENT AS COLONEL OF THE 10TH HUSSARS.

From an engraving after C. Rosenberg.





ous that it was impossible to accommodate all the guests in the rooms of the mansion itself, and the spacious gardens were accordingly made use of. Each of the walks crossing the broad promenade looking southward towards St. James's Park was closed in by walls and covered over by awnings, and so converted into supper-rooms. The walls of these rooms were lined with festoons of flowers, the arched roofs were similarly ornamented, and from them were suspended thousands of lights. The entrance to the broad walk was under an illuminated arch, and the southern end was filled by an enormous mirror.

The chief amusement of the company for some time consisted in perambulating the halls and apartments of the principal floor. The room in which the throne stood was hung with crimson velvet with gold lace and fringes. The canopy of the throne was surmounted by golden helmets with lofty plumes of ostrich feathers, and underneath stood the State chair. The ballroom floors were chalked in beautiful arabesque devices, and in the centre of the largest were the initials "G. III. R." This floor was divided for two sets of dancers by a crimson silk cord, but owing to the great number of persons and the excessive heat of the weather, no dancing took place here, nor were the dancers numerous in the ballroom.

The greatest triumph was reserved for the supper, which took place at two in the morning. The room at the bottom of the staircase represented a bower with a grotto lined with a profusion of shrubs and flowers. The grand table extended the whole length of the conservatory and across Carlton House to the length of two hundred feet. Along the centre of the table, about six inches above the surface, a canal of pure water continued flowing from a silver fountain beautifully constructed at the head of the table. Its banks were covered with green moss and aquatic flowers, gold and silver fish swam and sported through the bubbling

current, which produced a pleasing murmur where it fell and formed a cascade at the outlet.

At the head of the table above the fountain sat the Prince Regent on a plain mahogany chair with a leather back, the most particular friends of the Prince were arranged on each side. They were attended by sixty servitors, seven waiting on the Prince besides six of the King's and six of the Queen's footmen in their State liveries, with one man in a complete suit of ancient armour. What all this army of servants could find to do is a puzzle; but this perhaps is of no consequence: what one would like to know is what was the precise duty of the man in armour.

The account from which we have taken the foregoing enters into other minute particulars, but these details to-day excite but a languid interest. It is of more importance to note that the spirit of the whole thing was very childish, and was condemned by the subjects of the afflicted King who was made its ostensible cause. It is impossible not to agree with the writer that "notwithstanding that the company comprised all the members of the Administration, the foreign ambassadors, the principal nobility and gentry in town, the most distinguished military and naval officers, the Lord and Lady Mayoress and the principal aldermen and magistrates, who did not leave off their insensible feasting and dancing till six o'clock in the morning, there were still left in the kingdom many persons who bitterly compared the Prince's profession of filial devotion on accepting the Regency only a few months back with this ill-timed display of regal magnificence and prodigal rejoicing."

While the Prince was the recipient of congratulations, more or less sincere, Miss Berry was going through the tedious ordeal of keeping the Princess of Wales company, her lady-in-waiting having gone to the Carlton House fête.

"At eight," writes Miss Berry, "Lady Glenbervie

set off, leaving us three alone with the Princess and without any hope of being able to get away till she came back. I took upon myself the office of *Dragon* and declared that we must keep together the whole evening, for fear any stories were to be made of any of us the next day on the only evening in the year when the Princess was without any of her ladies. We first walked in the gardens, which had a number of people in them; then the Princess played a great deal on the piano in a manner to convince one she had played very well, but had been out of the habit of playing. Afterwards we talked of her and her education and her various and curious governesses, etc., etc., till nearly twelve o'clock, when we supped, and in half an hour afterwards arrived Lady Glenbervie, who had very cleverly done her business at the fête, seen everything but the supper, and gave us a very good account of everything she had seen. But the Princess kept us so long hearing it that we were all exhausted, and it was past two before we got home."

During this period of self-indulgent vanity and love of gorgeous display the tragic element was lurking in the background. Lady Albinia Cumberland, writing to her daughter on July 31, draws a pitiable picture of the afflicted monarch. The letter (as given by Mr. Childe-Pemberton) runs as follows: "The King remains in the same state, but is now rather better again as to *bodily health*. The mind is the same—constant talking, laughing, sometimes singing. His conversation for now a fortnight was with imaginary beings or rather those that are dead—particularly Prince Octavius, a Prince who died at five years of age and whom he doated on. He formed a plan of his marriage, supposing him seventeen. . . . He fancied he had the power of raising persons that are dead and making them seventeen, and that his having had an interview with the Almighty caused this power. He could only be persuaded to dress in white, which was by wearing

a towel, bedgown and drawers, no stockings and only gaiters. All his ideas were on purity. He would only drink water or milk and would not eat. Sometimes he thought himself in Heaven and that it was the Day of Judgment and spoke for all the wicked. . . . Poor man! He appears always happy, except when it is necessary to oppose him in his wishes—then his rage is excessive.”

The form of religious mania which the King's insanity took suggests recollections of Southey's "Vision of Judgment," in which George largely figures, and one is tempted to ask, did the poet know of the poor king's form of madness when he wrote this magniloquent piece of verse which led to Byron's scathing satire?

Miss Berry records how on June 24 she "went to see Carlton House, which remained with its decorations and the servants in their state uniforms and the Yeomen of the Guard in every room. The crowd was great at the gateway, and we should have had much difficulty in getting in if Lady Ellenborough had not sent for Sayer, one of the Bow Street officers, who was cap in hand to the chief-justice's lady.

"Within the house too the crowd was great, but not such as to impede each other except in the doorways; all the servants were uncommonly civil and attentive in accommodating the people and making them go the right way. The house is magnificent, and the Gothic green house or conservatory where the Prince supped, though ridiculous for the purpose it was built for, certainly made a most beautiful and richly ornamented supper room. All the plate was still on the table, and all the magnificent gold plate upon the sideboard, in three ranks at the top of the room, behind where the Prince sat; all the knives, forks, spoons, etc., etc., yet spread upon it, and so few people to guard and watch it, as really was creditable to the honesty of John Bull. The temporary rooms

in the gardens are immense and admirably contrived, and I dare say when lighted up must have been very handsome."

Two days after Miss Berry's visit a terrible accident happened, owing to the enormous crush. Women were nearly suffocated, limbs were broken, and more than one narrowly escaped with their lives. It was a melancholy ending to all the gaiety and brilliancy.

## CHAPTER XIV

1811

The Princess Charlotte's waywardness—A girlish outburst—The Queen's family troubles—The *Glenberrie Journals*—Princess Charlotte's undergarments criticised—Lord Glenberrie's credulity—The sad story of Princess Sophia—The mystery of the sealed box—The "Illustrious Person" implicated—The *Times* and the *Examiner* demand an explanation—Who is Captain Garth?—Princess Sophia's secret.

WHILE the festivities were going on at Carlton House, Charlotte was leading her old humdrum life with her grandmother at Windsor. The Princess of Wales, writing to Miss Hayman at the end of June, 1811, says: "Charlotte has been away three weeks at Windsor to be out of the way of these violent doings in her neighbourhood, and the Queen and all the Princesses have been delighted with her and quite astonished to find out at last how very clever, charming, and entertaining a creature she is. She is just returned, and in a month she goes to Bognor." From this one would suppose that the hearts of the old Queen and her daughters had gone out to the disappointed girl. But other accounts do not altogether corroborate this. It does not appear as though the girl herself was very communicative to her mother, and one may well doubt whether Caroline knew the actual state of affairs at Windsor.

Charlotte was now fifteen, and it must be confessed that with all her natural good qualities she had moods which showed her in a somewhat unfavourable light.

But she is to be excused; she was at a critical age, and it must not be forgotten that she had ample cause to force her into a state of incipient rebellion. Her treatment by the Regent, his efforts to put her on a level with a child, must have enraged her at times beyond endurance. It is easy to understand that she occasionally worked herself into a mental and emotional ferment which had to find an outlet. No doubt she sometimes shocked her friends, but they did not know everything, and the Princess was not one to wear her heart on her sleeve.

We get a glimpse of her waywardness at this period from two sources. The first is an extract from a letter written in the summer of 1811 by Lady Albinia Cumberland to her daughter, and quoted by Mr. Childe - Pemberton in *The Romance of Princess Amelia*. Lady Albinia writes: "Princess Charlotte is here [Windsor Castle]. She is grown and improved in looks, but I do not think her manner dignified, as a Princess's ought to be, or, indeed, as I should wish a daughter of mine to behave. She hates her 'Granny,' as she calls her [the Queen]—loves nobody except Princesses Mary and Sophia, goes swaggering about, and she twangs hands with all the men, is in awe of no one and glories in her independent way of thinking. Her passion is horses—that and mathematics are the only amusements she has. Her riding is beautiful—no fear of course—gallops and leaps over every ditch like a schoolboy—gave her groom a cut with her whip about the back to-day and told him he was always in the way. This was in good humour though, but it is not acting *en Princesse*." Possibly not, especially from the point of view of prim Queen Charlotte's Court ladies, who had limited ideas as to what constituted the orthodox behaviour of a princess. The truth seems to be that Charlotte was burning to emancipate herself, and her exalted rank was one of her fetters. The exact date of Lady Albinia's letter

is not given, but if it were written, as most probably it was, during the time of Charlotte's banishment to Windsor, so that she should not go to the Carlton House fête, it is easy to understand the reason of her outburst.

Other ladies besides Lady Albinia Cumberland were inclined to criticise the outspoken girl adversely, Lady Glenbervie, one of the Princess Caroline's ladies-in-waiting, among the number. An entry in Mr. Walter Sichel's *Glenbervie Journals*, dated October 11, 1811, runs thus: "The Princess [of Wales] brought me and Lady Glenbervie (with little Billie) in her carriage to Blackheath, where we dined with the Duchess [of Brunswick] and supped at Montague House. The Princess has removed all her plate, household *batterie de cuisine* and servants to Montague House, to remain an indefinite time. She seems tired of Kensington, and disgusted with it, and complains that nobody comes to her there.

"On Saturday the Princess Charlotte dined, it seems, with her mother at Kensington. Lady Glenbervie says she hardly spoke to her mother, or even answered her. It seems the day before, she and Lady de Clifford and nobody else dined with the Prince at York House. Perhaps her dryness to her mother was in consequence of instructions from her father. Lady Glenbervie says she is grown tall and very graceful—but that she is forward, dogmatical on all subjects, buckish about horses, and full of exclamations very like swearing. She was sitting with her legs stretched out after dinner and showed her drawers, which it seems she and most young women now wear. Lady de Clifford said: 'My dear Princess Charlotte, you show your drawers.'—'I never do but where I can put myself at my ease.'—'Yes, my dear, when you get in or out of a carriage.'—'I don't care if I do.'—'Your drawers are much too long.'—'I do not think so; the Duchess of Bedford's are much longer, and they are





PRINCESS CHARLOTTE AUGUSTA OF WALES.



bordered with Brussels lace.'—'Oh,' said Lady de Clifford in conclusion, 'if she is to wear them she does right to make them handsome.' Nobody was present on this occasion but the mother, Lady de Clifford, Lady Glenbervie, and Miss Garth."

The Queen must have seen much in the character of the young Princess to cause her uneasiness, and with her bitter experience of the lives of some of her sons and of one at least of her daughters, possibly she had fears for Charlotte's future. The girl had already had her flirtations, and her familiar manner with men, referred to by Lady Albinia Cumberland, must have shocked the prim and narrow-minded old lady. Queen Charlotte had had much worry over the love-affair of Princess Amelia, whose disappointment, together with the quarrels to which her attachment to General Fitzroy gave rise, had much to do with her death; but there was a much darker trouble lurking in the background in connection with another of her daughters, the Princess Sophia, whose sad and terrible story can hardly be passed over in view of the muddled and wrong-headed inference the garrulous Glenbervie drew from a piece of gossip founded on a conversation between Charlotte and Miss Garth. Following the passage dealing somewhat intimately with the Princess's *lingerie*, Lord Glenbervie, very much exercised over "Little Billie," who of course is the mysterious Willikin whom the Princess Caroline was fond of taking about with her, goes on to say: "On a former day when the daughter dined at Kensington, before Lady Glenbervie came into waiting, she [Charlotte] asked Miss Garth how William did, and what was to be done with him. 'I suppose,' says she, 'he will be in the army—in the 15th'—smiling visibly. Miss Garth looked grave. 'Oh,' says the Princess, 'I know all that perfectly.'"

These words would be perfectly unintelligible had not Lord Glenbervie gone on to give a key to the

mystery. He exclaims, "It is shocking, very shocking! I am not sure whether I have mentioned above the report that first Taylor [General Taylor], and then General Garth, were only cloaks, and that this mysterious William is the Duke of Cumberland's, who is the Colonel of the 15th Dragoons." Lord Glenbervie adds: "Billie is also a mysterious child. He is pale and sickly, and I think will not live. His reputed father and mother are workpeople in the docks at Greenwich. They come sometimes to see him. They think he is their son. Their son was fetched from them immediately after the mother bore him, and the whisper is that he was sent off immediately to Germany and Billie substituted for him. Shocking! very shocking!"

Lord Glenbervie's "Shocking!" is as applicable to his lordship's credulity as to his insinuations. Lord Glenbervie appears to have been an amiable old gentleman with a weakness for believing everything that was told him and retailing it afterwards as gospel truth. The entry is introduced in rather a vague way, and Lord Glenbervie omits to mention the name of his informant. If anything like this amazing conversation really took place, Miss Garth must either have told Lord Glenbervie (in which case he would surely have put the responsibility directly upon her) or she gossiped about it to others and in a garbled form it reached his lordship's ears. It is inconceivable that Charlotte, precocious as she was, can have speculated about the parentage of Willikin in the fashion reported.

But there is an explanation, and for this we must look to what happened some eighteen years later. In the spring of 1829 mysterious rumours began to be whispered which sent all classes of society into a ferment of curiosity. These rumours pointed to the raising of the veil which for years had been drawn closely over a certain scandal in the Royal Family. The Princess Lieven, writing to Lord Grey on

February 4, 1829, was the first to put on paper a definite reference to the dark mystery. "I have heard," she writes, "a horrible business talked about in the matter of the Duke of Cumberland. . . . They say a certain person intends to publish documentary proofs of the affair. In this I judge without knowing the evidence, and if not—it must be an infamous calumny, for I shall never give credit to unnatural horrors. This is probably the story you have heard vaguely referred to. By the way, in passing I presume the Duke of Cumberland will return now in all haste. What will he have to say?"

The gossip reached the ears of Creevey, who, as may be imagined, was not slow in adding to it. On February 14 he wrote: "Are you aware that Captain Garth is the son of this Duke [Cumberland]. . . . General Garth, at the suit of the old King, consented to pass for the father of this son. The latter, in every way worthy of his villainous father, has shown all the letters upon this occasion, including one of the King's. The poor woman has always said this business would be her death. Garth wants £30,000 for the letters, and to enhance their value shows the worst part of them."

The ball once set rolling soon increased in volume. On March 2 Creevey writes: "Having just met old Ogg [Lord Kensington] in the street . . . we got to this Windsor gossip. So says Ogg in his accustomed manner, "Damn, I know exactly what it's all about, and if you promise never to mention my name I'll tell you." I need not observe that the condition he imposed upon me I would have gratuitously adopted, as the disclosure would, with most, destroy my story. However, he swore he knew the facts of his own knowledge, and they are these: Knight, a barrister of the court of Chancery, has been advertising the Chancellor lately that on this day he should move for an injunction against Sir H. Taylor about Garth's letters, which

have been placed in his hands under some agreement with Garth and which the latter or his creditors wished to make more favourable to themselves. £3,000 for life and £10,000 in hand were the considerations, but it is stated he is to make it £16,000 in hand."

Thus far Princess Lieven and Creevey. At first sight their gossip does not appear to have any connection with the talk between Princess Charlotte and Miss Garth, but when the end of the story is reached it will be pretty evident that that which caused Lord Glenbervie to ejaculate "Shocking!" was a muddled version of a scandal which had nothing to do with either Willikin or the Princess of Wales, but concerned another Royal lady for whose sad history there can be only sympathy and pity.

Whatever may have been whispered privately, the first public reference was a very brief and guardedly worded article in the *Times* of March 14, advising a certain person, whose name was not given, to lose no time in quitting the country. No doubt those in the Royal circle knew the "person" pointed at, but to the general reader the article must have been an enigma. A week went over, during which the papers were silent, and then came a definite announcement which, instead of allaying curiosity, only served as a stimulant.

The announcement took the prosaic form of an affidavit, but the substance of this affidavit was anything but prosaic. It was in reality suggestive of pure melodrama. The document, which took up a whole column of the *Times*, began in the following sober fashion :

"Thomas Garth, of Melton Mowbray, Captain on half pay, filed an affidavit in Chancery to the effect that, in the month of November of the previous year [1828] he was in possession of certain documents, papers, and correspondence, of very great value and importance, relating immediately to his fortune, station, and affairs, and to the claims which he had

upon certain persons named in such documents and correspondence, and to the mode by which such claim can be substantiated and enforced."

After this preamble the affidavit went on to state that Captain Garth owed certain people sums of money, and that General Herbert Taylor of St. Katherine's Lodge, Regent's Park, being desirous of obtaining such documents and to dispose of them in such a way that no one could have access to them without Sir Herbert Taylor's consent, made an arrangement that on condition of Captain Garth handing over the documents and papers, he [Garth] was to have all his debts paid, and an annuity of £3,000 for life.

Then followed the procedure that was observed in regard to handing over the papers. A box was taken to the house of Charles Molloy Westmacott, of Adam Street, Adelphi [Westmacott was editor of the *Age*], the papers were looked through and verified, the box was locked, and tied round with tape and sealed with the seals of Captain Garth, Westmacott, and Sir Herbert Taylor. The key, however, was retained by Captain Garth, in case the agreement should not be perfected and performed. The box was then deposited in the hands of Sir John Dean Paul & Co., bankers of the Strand, in the names of Westmacott and Taylor.

The next paragraph in the affidavit adds to the mystery. It runs thus: "The reason given why the name of Westmacott was used, was lest some colour or countenance should be thereby given to certain rumours then supposed to exist respecting the nature of certain documents and papers, supposed to be in the possession of Captain Garth."

We are next told that, the preliminaries being concluded and the box deposited with the bankers, Captain Garth submitted a list of his debts to Sir Herbert Taylor, and now complained that though some months had gone over, nothing had been done, either in respect to discharging such debts or towards arrang-

ing the annuity. Captain Garth therefore declared that he had revoked all power given to Westmacott, but that he (Westmacott) joined with Captain Garth in demanding the restitution of the box, subject to the fulfilment of the terms agreed upon between him and Sir Herbert Taylor.

Tongues were at once at work. Creevey on the 19th wrote: "There is quite enough in this—Taylor being the purchaser and the price so monstrous—to make it quite certain the letters must contain great scandal affecting very great parties. General Garth is still alive, and it was when he was extremely ill and thought himself quite sure of dying that he wrote to young Garth, telling him who he was, explaining the part he—the General—had been induced to act, out of respect and deference to the Royal Family. . . . General Garth recovered unexpectedly and applied to young Garth for the documents, but I thank you! they had been seen and read and deemed much too valuable to be given back again."

In the issue of the *Times* in which the affidavit was published appeared a leading article opening as follows: "A portion of the mysterious affair to which such frequent allusions have been made has at length come out. This portion—but a small one indeed of the whole—is an affidavit made (as the ground of an injunction from the Court of Chancery) by Captain Garth. The deponent [Garth] herein swears that Sir Herbert Taylor had agreed—as the agent, no doubt, of some more important persons—**TO PAY GARTH'S DEBTS** and settle on him an annuity for life of *Three thousand pounds a year* as the recompence for the mysterious contents of a certain box.

"The bargain was closed, and the box was to be deposited with its contents at Messrs. Paul's the bankers, under the several seals of Sir Herbert Taylor as the agent of the unknown personage and of Mr. Charles Molloy Westmacott as Garth's agent till the



proper securities for the round sum and the payment of the annuity could be got ready. Garth having relinquished the box, no round sum has been advanced and no securities for the annuity have been prepared. The object of Garth's affidavit, therefore, originating in a suspicion of his quondam friend Westmacott's faith, is to prevent him going with Sir Herbert to the banker's and claiming the box before the stipulated price has been paid to Garth! This deponent further saith that the said Charles Molloy Westmacott intends to join with the said Sir Herbert Taylor in demanding the said box and its contents and in preventing the deponent from regaining possession of it, or of the stipulated equivalent for it! Such is the portion of this extraordinary transaction which is now made known by the affidavit—an affidavit fragrant, no doubt, with the most important inferences. Who is Sir Herbert Taylor and who are Garth and Westmacott? And what could bring the first into contact with the two last? The answers are obvious. However, for a moment we pass over this: our object is not to create general disgust by sad disclosures, but to prevent if possible future mischief to the state."

It is pretty clear from this that the *Times* possessed the key to the mystery. The *Globe*, following suit, observed: "It is to these papers that the mysterious paragraphs which have appeared in some papers have related. The rumours in themselves have been so horrible, and so unsupported by any accessible evidence, that we have thought proper to avoid any allusion to them which would imply that they were entitled to any attention, especially as the Illustrious Person implicated in them was so little popular on other accounts as to make it likely that imputations on him might much too greedily be listened to. The friends of the Illustrious Person alluded to—we know not why we should not mention him—the Duke of Cumberland—have denied the truth of the accusation

in the most positive terms ; and the following paragraph from the *Morning Chronicle* shows that some further proceedings are contemplated or in progress : ' The deep and painful interest excited by some recent strictures on the conduct and character of a Personage whose position has become an object of national curiosity has, as was to be expected, led to a minute investigation which has assumed a form almost entitled to the appellation of semi-official. The adherents of the Personage in question (for such these are) assert that not only has no proof of the alleged criminality been discovered, but that the imputation which formed the gravamen of the charge is clearly established by the stubborn evidence of facts and distances to be a *physical impossibility* ; in short, that a military name which has latterly been much before the public must look elsewhere for the equivocal honour of a mysterious affiliation.' ”

The *Examiner*, with the bluntness which might be expected, considering that its editor was Leigh Hunt, remarked : “ There is much talk about a Captain Garth (at present, we believe, in France) who, according to the reports in circulation, has recently discovered that he is *not* the son of his reputed father, General Garth, but the offspring of Two individuals of very high birth and station in the country.”

In its issue following that in which the affidavit appeared the *Times* returned to the charge, remarking : “ The affidavit of Mr. or Captain Garth, which we published in our last number, wrapped up though it was and guarded against all avoidable disclosures, has driven some people to a state which borders on insanity. The most desperate denials of facts have been attempted by certain daily and weekly mercenaries, but it is all in vain. If it be desired to conceal from a Christian community the contents of a certain box, will ‘ somebody ’ be pleased to inform us how Captain



QUEEN CAROLINE

*Caroline* *Q*

From an engraving by T. Wright after A. Wivell.



Garth's demand of a large sum of money and an enormous pension came to be listened to even for a moment? That there was a promise—an engagement—to comply with them no one dares dispute. What then was the consideration? This is what the world calls for. People do not nowadays bind themselves for nothing, for no necessity or no dread of infamy or paramount evil, to pay the debts of those who importune or threaten them—debts amounting to very many thousands of pounds; and to pay besides annuities of £3,000 per annum;—they do not, we say, bind themselves under such heavy obligations if they have nothing to fear as the consequence of their refusal to incur them. . . . To come to the point, *what secret was to be kept?* Tell that or say nothing. Two mystifications have been got up, since it was found impossible to pass by this affidavit or to answer it: first, a parentage has been described for the person swearing it; second, his character has been violently abused. But these are silly diversions of the public feeling; the morals of this sort of individual have no bearing on the case, let them be ever so monstrous or disgusting.

“The point to which these clumsy advocates should direct themselves is not *what is Captain Garth*, but *who is he?*”

Here, so far as the newspapers of the day were concerned, the mystery came to a sudden stoppage. What representations were made to the press is one of the secrets of journalism, but certain it is not another word was said and the public were left to read between the lines if they could. Up to a point the *Times* was justified in its public protest. It was not of the slightest consequence who Captain Garth was, or who were his parents; but it was a different matter when it was proposed to pay him £3,000 a year as hush-money. What fund was to defray this sum? From whose pocket was it to be dragged? Who could be

sure, remembering the unblushing way in which public funds were diverted in the form of sinecures and created posts, that this annuity of Captain Garth might not furnish another instance of abuse of trust ? All one can say is that, whatever was the end of the story, the secret was well kept.

In regard to the parentage of Garth, the obituary notice of General Garth, his reputed father, which appeared in the *Annual Register* eight months after the publication of the affidavit, is worth quoting. It runs as follows :

“ General Garth was said to have had by a lady of illustrious birth one son who bears his father’s name, is a captain in the army, and was the chief mourner at the general’s funeral, which took place on the 27th Nov. at St. Martin’s in the Fields. The will of General Garth was proved on the 10th of Dec. in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. It bequeathed the fee-farm rents of his estates in Northamptonshire, devised to the testator by his sister Elizabeth Garth, to his nephew Thomas Garth, a captain in the Royal Navy, his heirs and assigns. A moiety of an annuity or yearly pension of £3,000 granted by King Charles II., which the testator by a deed of settlement dated 17th Nov. 1820, had settled on himself, and ‘ in certain events ’ on his son Thomas Garth, was to be paid by the trustees to his son and his lawful issue ; and if he should leave no issue then to the aforesaid nephew of the testator, Captain Thomas Garth, R.N., his heirs and assigns. He bequeathed the house, 32, Grosvenor Place, to his said son Thomas Garth, and also the plate, household furniture, and personal effects, in the said house and in and about the estate at Piddletown. The residue of the testator’s property real and personal was given to his nephew Captain Thomas Garth, R.N.”

More than one thing in this curious will is of significance. The words “ in certain events,” the

coincidence of the amount of General Garth's annuity with the annual sum demanded by his "son" Captain Garth, point to some connection with the mystery of the sealed box. Is it beyond the bounds of probability that Captain Garth was scheming to earmark the whole of this annuity for himself? He appears to have been scoundrel enough for anything, to judge by the following extract from Mr. Childe-Pemberton's *Princess Amelia* :

"The shocking story of Princess Sophia has of late years been revived and made public in the letters of Princess Lieven and the Creevey papers respectively. Of Princess Sophia we will only say that her retribution was so terrible that it should silence the condemnation of all charitable persons. Of whatever indiscretions she may have been guilty, she was believed to have been brutally deceived by her own brother; while her son, grown to manhood, behaved with unparalleled callousness and meanness, demanding money for silence, and boasting that he was the only commoner whose parents were both of royal birth. He passed by the name of Garth, that of his reputed father General Garth, one of the King's equerries, who went through the form of marriage with Princess Sophia at Ilsington, near Dorchester, he being older than she by thirty years.

"As she advanced in life Princess Sophia was stricken with total blindness. She resided in a house in Kensington, where she was visited by such friends as valued her merits and admired her ability. She had been a connoisseur and collector of curios, and when unable to see her treasures she could describe them from memory. An old female servant known to the writer lived when young in the service of the Princess Sophia, then advanced in years. She spoke gratefully of her royal mistress, never alluding to any scandals which she may have heard. One curious fact, however, she often mentioned. At certain times

all the servants had strict orders not to enter the Princess's apartments. Her Royal Highness was to be left for a day or two totally unattended. No questions were asked and no reasons were vouchsafed. . . . It was then that the unhappy mother received visits from her son."

Her secret could hardly have been known, even to her most intimate friends. If they knew it, they kept their knowledge to themselves. Miss Amelia Murray, who often spent an evening with the Princess, writes : " Blind and suffering, no complaint ever issued from her lips. She said she did not like to have a resident lady, for not being able to see, she would always fancy the lady sitting opposite to her looking wearied. Her literary acquirements were considerable ; she had four readers who came to her every day—French, Italian, German, and English ; and as each was employed only for an hour, she observed " the fatigue would not be too great for them, and she was thus kept *au courant du jour* while she tore paper into small bits to fill pillows which she found were acceptable to invalids."

The poor Princess might have had an objection to a lady resident other than that represented. She could rely upon her old and trusted servants to keep her secret, and she would naturally be averse to extending to a lady companion a confidence which she could not very well withhold. And so the hapless lady led her lonely life, till death released her from bodily pain and bitterness of thought. Not one person in a thousand who visits Kensal Green Cemetery and chances to see a massive tomb to the left of the chapel knows that it marks the resting-place of an ill-used and unoffending lady, whose story is as sad as any to be found in the annals of Royalty.

The last echo of the pitiful story is heard in the following prosaic entry among the list of charges on



the Consolidated Fund of 1882, under the heading of "Hereditary Pensions": "The heirs of Captain Garth on account of moiety of pension granted in 1674 to John Granville, Earl of Bath (transferred from Gross Revenues in 1854), £1,200."

## CHAPTER XV

1811

The Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan—A delightful actress—The Duke a “nuisance”—His mania for matrimony—Mrs. Jordan’s droll blunder—The Royal Marriage Act—The Duke of Kent and the succession to the Crown—Madame St. Laurent—The Princess Caroline’s life at Kensington Palace—Her eccentricities—Miss Berry describes Princess Charlotte.

NOT long after the Carlton House fête, the private life of the Duke of Clarence came into the glare of publicity. Every one was of course aware that for some years the charming actress and popular favourite, Dorothea Jordan, had lived with him, and had borne him ten children, but it was not until the summer of 1811, when the Duke was anxious for a severance of the connection, that the real position of his domestic affairs became known, and in his endeavours to break off an alliance which had become distasteful to him, His Royal Highness showed himself to be both mean and selfish.

Dorothea Jordan was born in Waterford about 1762. Her real name was Bland, but she laid it aside for that of Francis on making her first appearance on the stage as Phœbe in *As You Like It* at Crow Street Theatre, Dublin. She afterwards played at Cork, Leeds, and York, taking at the latter city the name of Jordan. She came out at Drury Lane in 1785 as Peggy in *The Country Girl*, and “displayed” says Mrs. Inchbald, “such consummate art with such bewitching nature, such excellent sense and such bewitching simplicity,

that her auditors were boundless in their plaudits." She soon became one of the most popular actresses of the day, and in the parts of the Country Girl and Nell in *The Devil to Pay*, long stood unrivalled.

Mr. Cyrus Redding writes enthusiastically of Mrs. Jordan that "her hilarity was like champagne, brisk, refreshing, gleesome; she was boisterous enough too when she pleased. She laughed as no one ever laughed before, and made oftentimes the tender and soft run into a romping, jovial, don't-careish, rattling vein. She threw a spirit into everything, and made her incongruities of character forgotten in the second youth she assumed, as if in defiance of nature and time." Apropos of *The Devil to Pay*, which was adapted from an older farce, *The Devil of a Wife*, it is worthy of note, as has been pointed out, that the originality of the well-known bull 'I could not be in two places at once unless I was a bird,' attributed to Sir Boyle Roche, cannot be claimed by him. The words are to be found in *The Devil of a Wife*, which was produced in 1723, whereas Sir Boyle Roche was not born until 1743.

It does not appear when Mrs. Jordan was first under the "protection" of the Duke of Clarence, but it is said that the Prince of Wales's invaluable "general utility," M'Mahon, was the instrument who assisted the Duke in making a conquest of the popular actress. When the King heard of the affair, he was greatly annoyed, and asked the Duke how much he gave the lady. The answer was, "A thousand pounds a year." "What?—what?" cried the King. "Too much—too much. Give her five hundred! What?" Apparently the Duke of Clarence was more liberal than his brother of York, who started Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke with £100 per annum, but in reality he was not so, for Mrs. Jordan never received even the reduced amount suggested by the King, and had to keep His Royal Highness out of her earnings into the bargain!

Of course the great ladies of the Court looked askance at the popular actress, and drew their skirts around them when she was present with the Duke at fashionable functions. Thus we have Lady Elizabeth Feilding writing indignantly to Lady Mary Talbot, from Portsmouth, as follows: "What do you think of the Prince of Wales at the Duke of Clarence's fête—handing out Mrs. Jordan before the Countess of Athlone and the Duchess of Bolton? I say that the Duchess and Countess were very well served for putting themselves in such company."

The Duke of Clarence has been described as having all the faults of the Prince of Wales much exaggerated, and without the grace of his manners or his parts. "He is an absolute nuisance at Richmond," says Lord Glenbervie. "People did not like to receive him in their houses." He was a mixture of stupidity and avarice, with a tendency to trickery which was too transparent to deceive any one. An example of the latter characteristic is given in the Grenville papers. When he was seeking to get rid of Mrs. Jordan, who had always been faithful to him, he was anxious to marry Miss Catherine Long, and proposed to her. Miss Long wrote him a "very proper" letter in answer, declining the honour in the most decided terms. The Duke then went to stay at Ramsgate, and while there proposed three or four times more, and upon his return to town sent her an abstract of the Royal Marriage Act—altered as, he said, it had been agreed to by the Prince of Wales, whom he had consulted. He also conveyed to the lady the Queen's best wishes and regards. It will hardly be believed that this was entirely fiction? His Royal Highness had not said a word on the subject either to the Prince or to the Queen, and the alteration of the Marriage Act was a piece of deception!

Upon finding Miss Long had accepted Wellesley Pole, the Duke wrote to Lord Keith to propose for



DOROTHEA JORDAN.  
From a picture by George Morland.



Miss Mercer Elphinstone (Princess Charlotte's intimate friend), who in the most decided and peremptory manner rejected him. After these snubs, the Duke wrote to Mrs. Jordan at Bushey, where she was living, to say she might have half the children, namely five, and he would allow her £800 per annum. Mrs. Jordan's reply was that she would listen to no compromises until the Duke paid her what was owing. She asserted that during the twenty years she lived with him he had constantly received and spent all her earnings, and that through her association with him she was now a beggar. "This she repeats," we are told, "to all the neighbourhood of Bushey, where she remains, and is determined to continue."

One sequel to all this was very amusing. The Duke of Cumberland ("who must interfere in everything," to quote Grenville) took it into his head to inform Mrs. Jordan how his brother had been amusing himself, upon which Mrs. Jordan wrote a furious letter to the Duke of Clarence, and another to the Duke of Cumberland thanking him for the information he had given her. Unfortunately in her agitation she directed them wrongly, "in consequence of which there has been of course a scene between the brothers!"

Lady Charlotte Campbell has in her "Diary" an entertaining reference to the Duke's proposal of marriage to Miss Long. It would seem that His Royal Highness sent a certain lady to Miss Long to plead his cause, which she did in a somewhat awkward fashion, saying gravely that the Duke "was willing to part with Mrs. Jordan and give her place in his affairs to Miss Long. On which the poor little girl thought that she was intended to officiate in the *same capacity* as her predecessor; so she fell a-crying and called the unlucky ambassadress all the bad names she could think of."

According to Gronow the Duke's mania for matrimony revived in the beginning of 1817, the reason

alleged being that his debts were so heavy that the only way out of his difficulties was by marrying a rich heiress. The report was circulated all over England that the Duke had, with the consent of the Regent, proposed to Miss Wykeham, whose estates in Oxfordshire were large and of immense value. When the intention was communicated to Queen Charlotte, his royal mother was furious. She flew into a violent rage, and with vehement asseverations (either in English or in German) declared she would never give her consent. The law officers of the Crown were called in, cabinet councils met daily, and after much discussion it was determined to oppose the Duke's project; notwithstanding the opinion of one of the best lawyers that "a prince of the blood royal, being of age and notifying his intended marriage previous to its taking place, was at liberty to marry without the consent of the King, unless the two Houses of Parliament should address the Crown against it."

This, of course, was only in accordance with the Royal Marriage Act, which George III. induced Pitt to frame, so enraged was he at two of his brothers marrying ladies who were not of royal descent. He probably forgot he was very nearly doing the same thing himself, when he fell in love with the beautiful Lady Sarah Lennox, or perhaps he was angry at his brothers doing that for which he had the inclination but not the courage. The brothers who outraged the feelings of His Majesty were the Duke of Cumberland (who married Mrs. Horton, the widow of a Derbyshire gentleman) and the Duke of Gloucester (who, on the news of his brother's marriage reaching the King, confessed that he had been secretly married for some years to the Dowager Duchess of Waldegrave).

By the Royal Marriage Act, which was passed in 1774, every marriage contracted by a member of the Royal Family before twenty-five years of age, without the King's consent, is invalid, and if the Heir Apparent



marries a Roman Catholic, he forfeits his right to the Crown. After the age of twenty-five marriage without the Royal consent is permissible, but only after notice of such intention is given to the Privy Council twelve months before the ceremony is performed, and providing the two Houses of Parliament do not signify their disapproval. All marriages contracted in defiance of the Act can be annulled, and all who celebrate them or assist at them are subject to the penalty of *præmunire*.

Two of George III.'s sons set the Royal Marriage Act at defiance. One of course was the Prince Regent, the offence of whose marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert was aggravated because Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Catholic. The marriage was solemnised in the lady's drawing-room by a clergyman of the Church of England, and in the presence of her brother and uncle.

Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, was the other son of George III. who disregarded his father's injunctions. He fell in love with Lady Augusta Murray, second daughter of the fourth Earl of Dunmore; the marriage took place at Rome, and was solemnised by an English clergyman. The Duke, having some doubts as to the strict legality of this foreign marriage, went through the ceremony again with his wife, eight months afterwards, at St. George's, Hanover Square, under the names of Augustus Frederick and Augusta Murray. It was said that by this the provisions of the Royal Marriage Act were evaded, but the validity of the contention is very doubtful.

Without desiring to anticipate what will have to be told later on, it appears convenient to say here that the death of the Princess Charlotte was an unexpected event which materially affected her uncles. Under certain circumstances two possible claimants to the Crown were the Dukes of Clarence and Kent, and both considered their chances would be materially helped by a suitable marriage. The Duke of Kent made no

secret of his desires, and of the necessity for severing his connections with the amiable lady who had been associated with him for many years. He took Creevey into confidence in the following fashion: "The Duke," writes Creevey, "began, to my great surprise, a conversation upon the death of the Princess Charlotte, and upon an observation from me upon the rearrangement of the succession to the Throne upon this event, and of the necessity of the unmarried Princes becoming married if the Crown was to be kept in their family, the Duke went on to say:

"As for the Duke of York, at his time of life and that of the Duchess, all issue is of course out of the question. The Duke of Clarence, I have no doubt, will marry if he can; but the terms he asks from the Ministers are such as they can never comply with. Besides a settlement such as is proper for a Prince who marries expressly for a succession to the Throne, the Duke of Clarence demands the payment of all his debts (which are very great) and a handsome provision for each of his natural children. These are terms no Ministers can concede to. Should the Duke of Clarence not marry, the next Prince in succession is myself, and although I trust I shall be at all times ready to obey any call my country may make upon me, God only knows the sacrifice it will be to make, whenever I shall think it my duty to become a married man.

"It is now seven-and-twenty years that Madame St. Laurent and I have lived together. We are of the same age, and have been in all climates and in all difficulties together, and you may well imagine, Mr. Creevey, the pang it will occasion me to part with her. . . . You saw no doubt that unfortunate paragraph in the *Morning Chronicle*, which appeared within a day or two after the Princess Charlotte's death, and in which my marrying was alluded to. Upon receiving the paper containing that article at the same

time with my private letters, I did as is my constant practice—I threw the newspaper across the table to Madame Saint Laurent and began to open and read my letters. I had not done so but a very short time when my attention was called to an extraordinary noise and a strong convulsive movement in Madame St. Laurent's throat. For a short time I entertained serious apprehensions for her safety; and when upon her recovery I enquired into the occasion of this attack, she pointed to the article in the *Morning Chronicle* relating to my marriage.'

"Disclaiming any ambition to become King, the Duke went on to say in reference to a prospective wife: 'You have heard the names of the Princess of Baden and the Princess of Saxe-Cobourg mentioned. The latter connection would perhaps be the better of the two, from the circumstance of Prince Leopold being so popular with the nation; but before anything is proceeded with in this matter, I shall hope and expect to see justice done by the nation and the Ministers to Madame St. Laurent. She is of very good family and has never been an actress, and I am the first and only person who ever lived with her. Her disinterestedness, too, has been equal to her fidelity. When she first came to me it was upon £100 a year. That sum was afterwards raised to £400, and finally to £1,000; but when my debts made it necessary to sacrifice a great part of my income, Madame St. Laurent insisted upon again returning to her income of £400 a year. . . .

"As to my own settlement, as I shall marry (if I marry at all) for the succession, I shall expect the Duke of York's marriage to be considered the precedent. That was a marriage for the succession, and £25,000 for income was settled, in addition to all his other income, purely on that account. I shall be contented with the same arrangement without making any demands grounded upon the difference of the

value of money in 1792 and at present. As for the payment of my debts, I don't call them great. The nation, on the contrary, is greatly my debtor.'"

The two Dukes married in the same year, 1818, and in 1820 the Duke of Kent died, and in the course of time the Duke of Clarence became King, very much to his surprise. One of his first acts was to ennoble his children by Mrs. Jordan, and give the sons comfortable sinecures for which the nation paid. But their mother he had allowed to fall into pecuniary difficulties, and the amiable and talented woman died at St. Cloud "in great distress of mind," as one of her biographers puts it. It is perhaps only fair to say that her death took place in 1816, when possibly the Duke himself was, like all his brothers, heavily in debt.

Apropos of the Duke of Clarence, Gronow relates an anecdote which reads very curiously at the present time, in view of the odd association of chocolate with the army, dating from the royal gifts of the dainty to our soldiers during the South African war, and of which association dramatic and musical use has been made until the term "chocolate soldier" has become familiar in our mouths. Dining on one occasion with the officers on guard at St. James's Palace, the Duke astonished the Colonel by asking him, "Colonel, are you ever under the necessity of giving 'chocolate' to your young officers?" The Colonel expressed his ignorance, whereupon the Duke went on to say: "Oh, I can see, Colonel, that you have not breakfasted with Sir David Dundas, for it was his invariable custom to ask such officers as had fallen under his displeasure, for breaches of military discipline, to breakfast with him, in order that during the repast, where some excellent chocolate invariably formed one of the comestibles, the culprit should be severely lectured and sometimes recommended to leave the service." Sir David Dundas, it will be remembered, was appointed Commander-in-Chief on the resigna-

tion of the Duke of York in consequence of the Pensions scandal.

There are evident signs that the Regent's hatred of his wife became accentuated during the year 1811. The increase of power given him by the Regency Act made the yoke of wedlock more intolerable than ever, and his change of policy foreshadowed by the fête at Carlton House was gradually growing more pronounced. One result was the winning over of Mr. Perceval, who had hitherto been one of Caroline's adherents. Creevey was intensely disgusted at the *volte face*. Creevey was no longer the Regent's boon companion, and this fact may have tinged his opinions. He writes on July 20 thus :

“Prinny's attachment to the present Ministers, his supporting their Bank Note Bill, and his dining with them, must give them all hopes of being continued ; as I have no doubt they will. . . . The folly and villainy of this Prinny is certainly beyond anything. I was forcibly struck with this as I passed Perceval's kitchen just now, and saw four man cooks and twice as many maids preparing dinner for the Prince of Wales and Regent—he whose wife Perceval set up against him in open battle—who at the age of fifty could not be trusted by the said Perceval with the unrestrained government of these realms during his father's incapacity—he who, on his last birthday at Brighton, declared to his numerous guests that it was his glory to have bred up his daughter in the principles of Mr. Fox—he who in this very year declared by letter to the said Mr. Perceval, and afterwards had the letter published as an apology for his conduct, that he took him as his father's Minister, but that his own heart was in another quarter—by God! this is too much.”

The friendship not only of Perceval, but of others who were once strong supporters of Princess Caroline, was apparently waning about this time, and, it would seem, not without reason, for it must be admitted that

the eccentricities of the Princess of Wales in other directions were beginning to attract attention. From the date of the Regency fête her indifference to what was thought of her became more pronounced. It would seem as though the elevation of her husband accentuated her determination not to be thrust in the background. Of course her conduct was talked about, and maybe this was her intention. The "Diary" of her lady-in-waiting supplies many instances of her odd fancies. "She often does the most extraordinary things," we read, "apparently for no other purpose than to make her attendants stare.

"Very frequently she would take one of her ladies along with her, to walk in Kensington Gardens—all the party being dressed (it may be) in a costume very unsuited to the public highway; and, all of a sudden, she would bolt out at one of the smaller gates, and walk about Bayswater, and along the Paddington Canal, at the risk of being insulted, or, if known, mobbed—enjoying all the while the terror of the unfortunate attendant who had to walk after her. One day Her Royal Highness inquired at all the doors of Bayswater and its neighbourhood if there were any houses to be let, and went into many of them, till at last she came to one where some children of a friend of hers (Lord H. F.) were placed for change of air; and she was quite enchanted at being known by them, and at having to boast of her extraordinary mode of walking over the country."

A source of great annoyance to some of her friends was the favour the Princess showed to a family of musicians named Sapio. These people fooled Caroline to the top of their bent, and not only lived on her bounty but used her for their own ends. The elder Sapio had some reputation as a singer, and one occasionally comes across old pieces of music on second-hand book-stalls with the words "sung by Mr. Sapio" printed upon them. Lady Charlotte dubbed the father



SIR HENRY HALFORD, PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE  
OF SURGEONS.

From an engraving by J. Cochran after H. Room.





“old Chanticleer” and the son “young Chanticleer,” but more often the first was alluded to as the “old Ourang Outang.” The Princess was so absorbed in her friendship for these people that she took a cottage at Bayswater next door to where they lived. Her infatuation was the subject of gossip and jokes among the servants, who nicknamed the cottage “*Trou Madame*,” and probably invented scandal concerning it.

It is hard to know when the Princess was in jest or earnest. Take the following for example: “Lady — told me [Lady Charlotte] the old Ourang and his wife were with the Princess the whole day; that at dinner she cried and looked very ill, and said she had been so all night and seemed really suffering. After dinner Her Royal Highness made a wax figure as usual, and gave it an amiable addition of large horns; then took three pins out of her garment and stuck them through and through, and put the figure to roast and melt at the fire. If it was not too melancholy to have to do with this, I could have died of laughing. Lady — says the Princess indulges in this amusement whenever there are no strangers at table; and she thinks her Royal Highness really has a superstitious belief that destroying this effigy will bring to pass the destruction of his royal person. What a silly piece of Spite! yet it is impossible not to laugh.”

Of course this was but a reminiscence of the old days of witchcraft, and possibly a relic of some wild romantic German legend told to Caroline in her youth. The Princess delighted in mystifying and fooling her friends just “for the fun of the thing.” The mischief was that she was taken seriously. She appears to have been surrounded by people who were always looking out for something. Many of these secretly sympathised with the Prince—Miss Hayman, for instance, who, though not the Princess’s enemy in any form, was prone to criticise her somewhat severely. Miss Hayman says :

“I think the Hermaphrodite’s [Lady Charlotte Campbell] description of the Princess gives a very good idea of her character. She was good-natured in the extreme to all her Ladies, and to all her servants, so that it was impossible not to feel affectionate interest in her even when her defiance of all propriety grieved us all to the heart. Nature had formed her well, and a good education might have done much in forming a fine character, for abilities were in no respect wanting, but bad as her education was, it did not deprive her of the consciousness of what was right and what was wrong, for no one could talk morality better when it answered her purpose to do so. That she was ‘goaded into doing wrong from the first’ I do not think, except what passed in the early days of her marriage goaded her through life, and certainly the cabal I have described was no small degree of ‘goaded’ to the Prince, to whom all the transactions at Blackheath appeared to be known.

“The restrictions on her intercourse with the Princess Charlotte when she was growing towards womanhood appeared a harsh, unfeeling measure, but there were many excuses for it. One was that in the visit to Kensington, the party was Sir William Drummond and Lady Charleville. Sir William got into a *religious* conversation with the Princess Charlotte, who manfully maintained her principles against his abominable travesties of all she held sacred. Neither the mother nor governess attempted to stop this conversation, and I saw Lady Charleville was greatly annoyed. At parting Lady de Clifford said to me, ‘Should I not tell the Prince of this?’ I said, ‘Yes, Lady de Clifford, before you sleep.’ However, she did not. He heard it another way, as he did everything, and gave her ladyship a severe lecture. Then the restrictions were drawn very tight. I saw the Sapios frequently, and was delighted with *their* singing, though I lamented their dining so often. Of the cottage

I know no more than that I heard that H.R.H. had taken one next door to the Sapios, but I never saw her walk to Bayswater or out of the Palace Garden. My last waiting was at Connaught House. I left H.R.H. determined to go abroad, and lamented that I was too old (my plea and true enough) to accompany her. When all was fixed H.R.H. wrote to tell me so, and that I should receive my salary as a pension. When she returned as Queen I received an invitation to visit her, but I was become still 'older' and could not accept it.

"On her Majesty's melancholy and unexpected death, whoever made out the lists of attendants to be provided for made the unaccountable mistake of placing my name among the Women of the Bedchamber instead of Privy Purse, and all the Women of the Bedchamber were cut off, and I amongst them, though all the servants retired upon pensions had their pensions continued. I represented this mistake to Lord Liverpool through my good and kind friend Lord Grenville, and the pension I now enjoy was very soon after given to me."

In the month of November 1811, Miss Berry stayed for a week with the Princess at Blackheath, and during the visit Charlotte dined with her mother. "Princess Sophia of Gloucester," Miss Berry records, "arrived just before with Miss Dee; then Princess Charlotte with Lady de Clifford. She is very much grown and improved in figure since I saw her last January in Kensington. I don't know whether her face is improved; her mouth is less pleasing and less resembling her father's than it was; but her bust is perfect; her head not too large, and well placed; has much intelligence in her countenance, though the expression is not very agreeable; her walk is dreadful, but I think it is only girlish affectation, which will cure itself. We dined by daylight—seven women and not one man; an unheard-of thing at the Princess's. After dinner we went down to the drawing-room, and there stayed

till past seven o'clock, when the Princess Charlotte and her governess went away."

Miss Berry's first impressions of the Princess of Wales, which were somewhat unfavourable, gradually disappeared on closer acquaintance. The Princess seems greatly to have taken to the sprightly lady, and in 1812 the latter was continually being invited to stay at Blackheath, where the Princess was fond of residing at this time. On one occasion Miss Berry met at dinner, among others, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Humphry Davy, and Thomas Campbell. She was charmed with the first and not at all with the last: "he appears to think too much of himself," is her verdict. During this visit she makes the following entry in her "Journal":

"The Princess Charlotte and Lady de Clifford arrived just as we finished our drive. We all sat down to dinner without making any toilet. The young Princess was very gay, very talkative, in very good humour, and all one could expect from a young girl of sixteen, very quick and very lively, and very ill brought up. After dinner she played all sorts of things upon the piano. Her musical memory is astonishing. As to her looks she has grown and improved since I saw her in November; with rouge she would be really striking, but she does not walk any better, and has not dignified manners."

The week following Miss Berry went to Sir Humphry Davy's house to meet the Princess, who had expressed her desire to see the effects of the great chemist's newly discovered "laughing gas." Sir Humphry Davy tried it, and also Sydney Smith, Sir James Mackintosh, Lady Charlotte Campbell, and the Princess. The gas did not appear to increase the Princess's natural vivacity; the effects were only visible in the eyes and upon the complexion. But the dose she took was very small. With the others it produced "a wonderful intoxication of three minutes, astonishing!"

## CHAPTER XVI

1812

The Princess Charlotte's first ball—The Duchess of York—Her free-and-easy establishment at Oatlands—Her "week-end" parties—Princess Charlotte and the Regent dance the "Highland Flurry"—Mysterious accident to the Regent—Singular rumours in consequence—Princess Charlotte subjected to arbitrary rules—Unpopularity of the Regent—First appearance of the Princess Charlotte at the opera—An unfortunate dinner party.

THE contemplated separation of the Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan was the topic under discussion in Society circles in November 1811, and in the same month the Duchess of York gave a ball at Oatlands for the purpose of introducing the Princess Charlotte into the world of fashion. This was done not only with the sanction of the Regent, but probably at his suggestion. In any case, it is evident that the Prince's ideas with regard to Charlotte were not those which caused so much surprise during the following year. Creevey speaks of the Regent's high good-humour and fine spirits when at Brighton in the autumn of 1811, and it may be that in the fullness of his new position and powers he was disposed to put aside his worries and relax the tight hold he had hitherto maintained over the turbulent Charlotte. Whatever may have been the reason of the Regent's complaisance, the young Princess must have felt justified in thinking that the days of her childhood were past.

Into the gaiety of the ball at Oatlands she threw herself with all the exuberance of her nature. She

was very partial to the Duchess of York, and she felt she was among friends, in a totally different world from that which she had left at Windsor, hedged in as it was by primness and austerity. It was on this occasion that one of the foreign envoys spoke of her as "a young girl who had the air of a headstrong boy in petticoats."

Stockmar brings the Duchess of York before us in one of his rapid, vigorous sketches. "She was," he writes, "a little animated woman, talks immensely, and laughs still more. No beauty; mouth and teeth bad. She disfigures herself still more by distorting her mouth and blinking her eyes. In spite of the Duke's infidelities, their matrimonial relations are good. She is quite aware of her husband's embarrassed circumstances, and is his prime minister and truest friend; so that nothing is done without her help."

The Duchess was a daughter of Frederick William of Prussia, and she once told Stockmar how her royal father had forced her as a girl to learn to shoot, as he had observed she had a great aversion to it. At a stag chase she always fired with closed eyes, because she could not bear to see the suffering of wounded animals. When the huntsmen told her that in this way she ran the risk of causing the game more suffering through her uncertain aim, she went to the King and asked if he would excuse her from all sport in future if she shot a stag dead. The King promised to grant her request if she could kill two deer one after the other, without missing—which she did.

Oatlands, the Duke's well-known seat near Weybridge, was purchased by him in 1790, or thereabouts, for £45,000. The greater part was destroyed by fire three or four years after the purchase, which, however, afforded a happy excuse for rebuilding in the sham Gothic style then in favour. Here the Duchess lived, quite secluded, for a period of nearly thirty years, much regarded by her neighbours for her goodness

and charities. Her efforts at entertaining them were of an eccentric character. Thus, to celebrate the Duke's birthday, she feasted all his tradesmen, sending them two guineas apiece for their conveyance down. She invited the Prince of Wales to meet them, and opened a ball with him herself. When some strollers came to perform in a barn close by and asked her patronage, she went out of charity and brought all her servants. Next day a Methodist came to preach in the same place, and also asked her patronage, which she accorded; but her servants excused themselves on the ground of not understanding English. "No," she said; "you went to the comedy, which you understood less, so you must go to this." At a banquet she gave to the King in 1810 she celebrated the royal visit by admitting the whole neighbourhood *en masse*, feasting them with fowls, ham, beef, plenty of ale, and bowls of punch. Any one of any degree was welcome.

The Duchess was very fond of gaiety, and she probably was the initiator of the present popular week-end parties. These parties, Greville tells us, took place "every Saturday, and the guests go away on Monday morning. . . . There are almost always the same people, sometimes more, sometimes less. We dine at eight, and sit at table till eleven. In about a quarter of an hour after we leave the dining-room the Duke sits down to play at whist, and never stirs from the table so long as anybody will play with him. When anybody gives any hint of being tired, he will leave off; but if he sees no sign of weariness in others, he will never stop himself. He is equally well amused whether the play is high or low, but the stake he prefers is fives and ponies. The Duchess generally plays also at half-crown whist. The Duke always gets up very early, whatever time he may go to bed."

The Duchess was even more irregular in her domestic habits than the Duke. She seldom went to bed, or if she did, only for an hour or so; she slept, dressed,

upon a couch, sometimes in one room, sometimes in another. She dressed and breakfasted in the afternoon, and then walked out with her dogs, of which she had about forty of different kinds and degrees. As each of the animals died, he was reverently buried near the gold-fish pond, and a neat tablet with an inscription—often in verse—placed over his remains. There was, besides the dogs, a strange menagerie of kangaroos, ostriches, etc.

One of her few foibles was an extreme tenaciousness of her authority at Oatlands; and one way in which this was shown was in the stable, where, although there were always eight or ten carriage-horses which did nothing, it was impossible ever to procure a horse to ride or drive, because the Duchess appropriated them all to herself. "The other day," writes Greville, "one of the aides-de-camp (Cooke) wanted to drive Burrell, who was there, to Hampton Court; he spoke of this at breakfast, and the Duke hearing it, desired he would take the curricule and two Spanish horses which had been given to him. The Duchess, however, chose to call these horses hers and to consider them as her own. The curricule came to the door, and just as they were going to mount it a servant came from the Duchess (who had heard of it) and told the coachman that her Royal Highness knew nothing of it, had not ordered it, and that the curricule must go home, which it accordingly did."

The Duchess hated ceremony, and as a consequence the ball at Oatlands was not marked by rigid etiquette and cold formality, and it is pretty certain that Charlotte, who was as unconventional as her aunt, enjoyed herself thoroughly. Everything went well till there came an incident which furnished much talk. The circumstances of the "incident" are somewhat obscure, and all that can be done is to reproduce the allusions to it in the letters of the time.





JOHN FISHER, D.D., BISHOP OF SALISBURY.  
From an engraving by Sidney Hall after W. H. Brooke.



The Regent and his daughter that night were on the best of terms, and they took part together in one of the Scotch dances at that time very fashionable, thanks to the patronage given to Neil Gow, the celebrated Scotch violinist and the composer of numerous reels and strathspeys. The particular dance in which the Regent and Charlotte engaged was known as the "Highland Flurry," and it was reported in one of the newspapers that "the Prince led off the dance and chose his daughter for his partner, but whilst leading her briskly along, his right foot came in contact with the leg of a sofa which gave the limb a twist, by which two tendons of his foot were broken."

As described here, the accident must have been of sufficient gravity to incapacitate his Royal Highness from further exertion during the evening. There is no evidence that it did so, and in fact doubts have been raised whether the Prince received any injury during this particular dance. It is true Fremantle, writing to the Marquis of Buckingham, corroborates with some slight variations the above version of the "accident," but he does so with his tongue in his cheek after the following fashion: "As you will be interested in knowing the particulars of the Prince of Wales's attack, I write to say that although it was nothing but a strain of the muscle, he has made so much of it and it affected him so greatly that it has created quite a sensation. It was done while Princess Charlotte was at Oatlands; she was endeavouring to dance a Scotch step called the 'Highland Flurry,' and there was a laugh in endeavouring to make Adam (who was one of the party) teach her. The Prince got up and said he would show her, and in doing so evidently wrenched his ankle. This took place ten days ago, since which he has *never been out of bed*. He complained of violent pain and spasmodic affection, for which he prescribed for

himself and took a hundred drops of laudanum every three hours. . . . He will sign nothing and converse with no one on business . . . and you may imagine therefore the distress and difficulty in which the Ministers are placed. The Duke of Cumberland is going about saying it is a shame and that he could get up and be perfectly well if he pleased."

The Duke of Cumberland, after his usual fashion, did his best to make the "incident" tell against the Regent, and from the current gossip of the day it would appear that there was no accident at all, but that the indisposition of the Regent arose from a cause other than dancing. A fracas outside the ballroom was hinted at. Apparently this is what the writer (C. B. Wollaston) of the following letter (to be found in the "Journal" of Mary Frampton) refers to: "There have been strange rumours about the Regent, but I verily believe without foundation. The fact is, as Ryder [Secretary of State at this time for the Home Department] told me this morning, that he is in considerable pain from his legs, and obliged to keep them almost entirely in a horizontal position, which is an inconvenient one for writing; but certainly much distress and inconvenience has arisen on all public offices from the want of his signature. It has been said that a report of his being in the same state as his father [*i.e.* mental breakdown] was traced to the Duke of Cumberland, and that in consequence the Prince has broken off all intercourse with the Duke; but Ryder tells me that he saw the Duke at Oatlands two mornings ago, and that he and the Duke of Kent had been breakfasting in the Prince's room."

Mr. John Ashton says of this queer business that "whatever was the matter with him [the Regent] he did not leave Oatlands until the 9th December, or nearly a month. Nobody believed in the royal sprain, but the story that gained credence and was

made the most of by the caricaturists was that the Regent had at the ball grossly insulted Lady Yarmouth, for which he was most heartily and soundly thrashed by her husband, Lord Yarmouth."

Whether the result of the "Highland Flurry" at Oatlands had anything to do with souring the Regent's temper, or that fresh differences had arisen between him and the Princess of Wales, it is impossible to say, but certain it is that the beginning of the year 1812 was marked by a renewal of the old dissensions, and by a return to the ridiculous and arbitrary rules under which Princess Charlotte had long chafed. There would seem to be grounds that Queen Charlotte was at the bottom of the mischief. The Queen hated both mother and daughter, and her hatred was returned with interest. "There are only two things I don't like at all," once said Charlotte. "One is apple tart, and the other is my grandmother" (Lady de Ros's version is "boiled mutton and—grandmamma").

Tongues were again at work, and popular opinion was unmistakably on the side of the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte. Indeed it may be said that never was the Prince Regent more unpopular than during the year 1812. His ostentatious display on the occasion of his being created Regent had done him far more harm than good, and his wasteful extravagance at that time had brought home forcibly to the people how heavily they were oppressed by taxation and by the high prices of the necessaries of life, while his abandonment of his old political friends added fuel to the flame. W. H. Fremantle, writing on May 6, says: "He had not nerve to go to the Royal Society dinner. He had presented them with a lamp a few days previous, and on the day of the dinner he sent a message to Lord Stafford to beg that, when his health was drunk, he would say something respecting this lamp, which he should be pleased to

change or alter in any way the Society might wish if it did not suit. Lord Stafford accordingly did say a few words, but notwithstanding all this trick on his part it completely failed, and he did not receive one token of applause. You may probably have heard that he has made a new list for the *droit d'entrée* at Carlton House, in which he has struck out the name of Lord Moira and all his old friends and counsellors with the exception, I think, of Lord Albemarle. . . . After declaring publicly right and left his intention of going to the Lord Mayor, his nerves failed him and he sent an excuse. I am confident he would have been hissed through the city."

The sarcastic comments in the press must have stung the Regent into a state of irritation which drove him to his customary remedy for all ills. A proof of his growing habit of drinking was unhappily evident on the occasion of the first appearance of the Princess Charlotte at the opera, which took place towards the end of February, when her free and lively demeanour was the subject of both approval and censure, according to the notions of propriety held by the critic. She went with the Duchess of York, and she leaned out of the box, and nodded, smiled, and waved her hand to those of her acquaintances whom she recognised. Had the persons who disapproved of her behaviour been aware of what she had gone through a few hours before, they would have been more charitable in their judgment. The fact was she was suffering from an attack of "nerves," on the cause of which Grenville lifts the veil in the following letter to his brother :

"The strange boundaries of Carlton House supply the appetite of the town with daily anecdotes more or less interesting. Two days ago the Prince invited Lauderdale to a dinner at which the Princess Charlotte, the Duke of York, two or three ladies with Sheridan,

Lord Erskine, Adam, and two or three more of his family, making from sixteen to twenty, were at table at Carlton House. A good deal of wine passed even before the dessert, and before the servants had quitted the room the Prince began a furious and animated attack upon the letters and the writers of the letters. [These letters had passed between the Duke of York and Lords Grenville and Grey, and had reference to 'the future administration of public affairs.'] This went on some time. The Princess rose to make her first appearance at the opera, but rose *in tears*, and expressed herself strongly to Sheridan as he led her out, upon the distress which she felt in hearing her father's language. Nor should it be forgot that at the opera, seeing Lord Grey in the box opposite to her, she got up and kissed her hand repeatedly in the sight of the whole opera. . . . The next day [Sunday], upon Lord Moira calling at Carlton House by the Prince's order, the Prince sent out his page-in-waiting to him to tell him that he had been so drunk the preceding night he was not well enough to see him." The incident at the dinner table is said to have inspired Byron's verses "To a Lady weeping" :

Weep, daughter of a noble line,  
 A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay—  
 Ah! happy if each tear of thine  
 Could wash a father's fault away!

Weep, for thy tears are virtue's tears,  
 Auspicious to these suffering isles—  
 And be each drop, in future years,  
 Repaid thee of thy people's smiles.

Events, political and social, were hastening to bring the Regent and the Princess Charlotte into open hostilities, and it was not long before the girl was showing signs of an independence which boded ill for that "tranquillity of mind" on which the Regent set such store.

On January 14, Miss Berry writes: "Drove with Lady C. Campbell to Blackheath. We found the Princess, who received me in the most gracious manner possible. . . . I was left *tête-à-tête* till half-past seven o'clock, when we separated to dress, I almost dead with so much talking. The toilette of the Princess is always so rapid that it was impossible not to keep her waiting a few minutes." The Princess had never cured herself of the faults which Lord Malmesbury tried to correct eighteen years previous, when she was Princess Caroline of Brunswick. It will be remembered how her hasty toilets shocked the courtly envoy, equally with her propensity for talking.

A month later was published the Prince's celebrated letter to the Duke of York announcing his intention of retaining his father's Tory Ministers, and thus throwing over his Whig friends, associates whom some months before he regarded as his dearest friends. The move was a false one, and added immeasurably to the unpopularity of the Regent. The pens of the satirists were at once at work, and among other effusions appeared Moore's parody of the letter, beginning :—

At length, dearest Freddy, the moment is nigh  
 When with P-rc-v-l's leave, I may throw my chains by,  
 And, as time is now precious, the first thing I do  
 Is to sit down and write a wise letter to you.

Miss Berry alludes to this letter in an entry in her "Journal" dated February 16, and her summary of the situation that "he (the Regent) would govern completely as King" was by no means exaggerated.



## CHAPTER XVII

1813

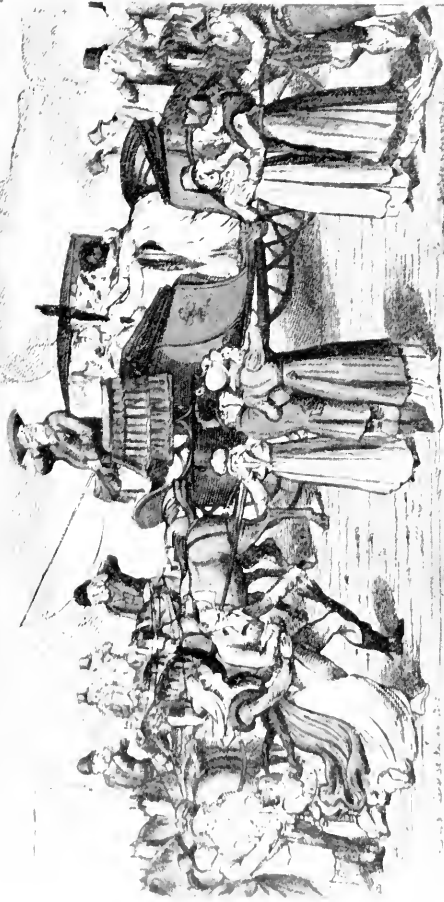
The Queen's harshness towards the Princess Charlotte—Threatens to have the Princess of Wales turned out if she visits her daughter at Windsor—Hostilities between the Queen and Charlotte—The Queen and the Regent act in concert—Princess Charlotte surrounded by spies—Charlotte begs to be allowed an establishment of her own—The request refused—Dismissal of Lady de Clifford—Charlotte refuses to be treated as a child—Sir Henry Halford suggests a compromise—Miss Knight appointed "lady companion."

WHATEVER was the real cause of a reversion to the old policy of repression, the fact is patent that Queen Charlotte took a leading part in the changes which came about in 1812, changes which marked a turning-point in the Princess's life, when she was no longer a girl, but was entering upon womanhood, her senses quickened by the trying and exceptional experiences which had attended her from her earliest recollections.

Popular feeling began in 1812 to be unmistakably in favour of the Princess of Wales and her daughter. "Don't desert your mother, dear," shouted the mob when Charlotte drove in the streets, and the Princess responded with bows and smiles. The Regent was attacked by the press in language of unparalleled violence and scurrility. When he opened Parliament not a cheer greeted him, and cries of "Down with the Regent!" were by no means infrequent. The Regent ascribed all this ill-feeling towards him to the Princess of Wales; his hatred of her became a mania, and once he was goaded into anything but a dignified

exclamation. Some one at Carlton House was holding forth about the victories of the Duke of Wellington in the north. The Regent burst out: "Damn the north! and damn the south! and damn Wellington! The question is, *How* am I to be rid of this damned Princess of Wales?"

Meanwhile the Queen, in her paltry, spiteful way, was doing her best to back up her son. She issued offensive instructions affecting the visits of the Princess Caroline to her daughter, and hostilities reached an acute stage in August. Writing to Miss Hayman, Caroline says: "My daughter is now at Windsor; she came to pay a visit to my mother [the Duchess of Brunswick] on her birthday, for which reason I do not expect her this week; but next week and the week following, if she does not come I shall certainly go to Windsor and have the honour to be turned out by her Gracious Majesty." The concluding words refer to a rumoured remark of the Queen that if the Princess of Wales had "the impertinence" to come to Windsor, Princess Charlotte's governess ought to have power to turn her out. Lady Rose Weigall thought it seemed almost incredible that the Queen should make such a speech, but judging from what Queen Charlotte said and did on other occasions to show her hatred of her daughter-in-law, it appears to us not only credible but quite possible. If Lady Charlotte Campbell's version of the circumstances is correct, the Princess *did* pay her daughter a visit at Windsor, and the result was an act of authority on the part of the Regent to restrain such visits in the future. Lady Charlotte's story is this: "I hear, that in consequence of the Princess having gone to Windsor to see her daughter, a message was sent to her from the Regent by Lord Liverpool, to desire her not to go there again. Her reply was that if she saw the Princess Charlotte as usual, once a week, she would obey: but if not, she thought her duty in respect to her child was paramount to all



*FRANCINE in HIDE-BIND, or the French M. M. M.*

MEETING OF PRINCESS CAROLINE AND PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

From a cartoon by Gillray.



others. The Princess Charlotte has not come to her, and the Princess of Wales is determined to go again to Windsor. Her Royal Highness knows she will be refused seeing her daughter, but wishes to have the refusal in black and white; and also to be able to say that she did all in her power to prove her love for Princess Charlotte."

The result of this little "breeze" was to extinguish all hopes of a better understanding between the Queen and her granddaughter. The old woman was quite blind to the fact that while Charlotte could be readily won by gentleness, she would be roused into resistance by harshness; that she clung to her mother out of her need for affection, and that exasperating coercion did but strengthen her sympathy for the repudiated parent.

Charlotte threw herself into the fray with all the ardour and, it may be added, all the rashness of youth. She spoke contemptuously of the Prince's drinking habits; she nicknamed Queen Charlotte "The Merry Wife of Windsor," and was reprimanded by her father in consequence. "Don't you know," said he, "my mother is the Queen of England?" "And you seem to forget that my mother is the Princess of Wales," she retorted with effect. No wonder, as Brougham writes, that the war was pretty hot between Carlton House and Kensington. Eventually a sort of truce was proclaimed, but the position was not materially altered. Indeed, the Queen and her son were meditating a counter-stroke, for which an opportunity, presented itself at the end of the year. For some time during 1812 Lady de Clifford had been unwell, and during this illness the Princess had a good deal to do with Miss Cornelia Knight, who was then in the service of Queen Charlotte. Miss Knight, indeed, appears to have acted as the Princess's chaperon, and in her "Autobiography" tells how on one occasion she was appointed to accompany the girl to Kensington

when she went to dine with her mother. Miss Knight's experience is interesting, because it bears out the assertion that the Prince converted his friends into spies.

Miss Knight states that she had the most precise instructions that she was not to leave Charlotte alone with her mother, nor prolong her stay beyond a certain hour. The day was passed in harmless fashion enough. "When we arrived," says Miss Knight, "the Princess of Wales proposed seeing the state apartments in Kensington Palace till dinner was served, after which Lady Charlotte Campbell played and sang to Princess Charlotte. The Princess of Wales made me sit by her side on the sofa and was very gracious. I must say I neither heard nor saw anything extraordinary during this visit." It would seem that the Prince Regent trusted no one but his own friends, for on the way from Kensington to Windsor the carriage stopped, and Lord Yarmouth, who at that time was in high favour with the Prince, came up to the door to speak to the Princess. "He no doubt," observes Miss Knight drily, "informed the Prince that all was right."

Towards the end of this year the Queen informed Miss Knight that a change was about to take place in Princess Charlotte's establishment; that Lady de Clifford had resigned and that the Dowager Duchess of Leeds was to be her governess, with a lady or two to assist her. This arrangement was by no means to Princess Charlotte's liking. She was anxious to show her independence, and she was tired of the domination of governesses. When it was told her that the resignation of one governess simply meant the appointment of another, "she was terrified," and through her friend Miss Mercer Elphinstone wrote a letter of remonstrance to Lord Liverpool, begging that she might have an establishment of her own, and instead of a governess and assistants, ladies-in-waiting. To show

how the Princess at this time was hedged in by the precautions taken by her father, it is enough to say that this letter had to be conveyed secretly to Miss Elphinstone, who, although Charlotte's oldest and most intimate friend, was not allowed to have any communication with her for political reasons, the Elphinstone family being in opposition to the Prince.

According to Lady Charlotte Campbell, Miss Elphinstone was on another occasion a very useful friend to Princess Charlotte, "inasmuch as it was through her means that a silly correspondence into which the Princess had entered with a Captain Hesse was delivered up and destroyed," and this statement finds confirmation in a reference to the same matter by Greville, as will be seen further on.

When the Prince heard of the girl's letter to Lord Liverpool, he flew into a violent passion and rushed post-haste to Windsor, taking with him the Lord Chancellor for legal support. It was clear that the Prince recognised that he was dealing with no child, but with a girl who had a will of her own and knew what she wanted. Maybe also he saw certain family characteristics reproduced in the Princess, and this enraged him the more.

"It was on a Sunday the 17th of January," writes Mrs. Rachel Jones, "that the dignified repose of Windsor was broken by a scene which took place in one of the rooms in the small house close to the Castle called the Queen's Lodge, where Queen Charlotte lived and where she, King George, and their numerous family had long found their homely shelter. Six persons of the most curiously diverse aspect were assembled in the Queen's room. Two ladies, seventy years of age, the one, little old Queen Charlotte, busy, hard, strong-willed and stately, with great dignity of manner, but with the mean and stunted features which had impelled the crowds who had welcomed her arrival in England fifty years before to echo

‘Pug!—Pug!’ ‘Vat is poug?’ had asked her Majesty of the Duchess of Ancaster sitting opposite to her in the carriage. ‘Please your Majesty, it means God bless your Majesty!’

“The Queen’s wizened throat is bound with jewels. Her head is wrapped round by a large handkerchief or turban; two touches of rouge enrich her cheeks. Her figure, small, firm, and erect, seems to be emphasising cold decisions. The other elderly lady, the friend and governess of the Princess Charlotte, stands there with her intelligent and sympathetic air and her bright hazel eyes . . . those happy personal charms which survive all others and are wont even to shine more conspicuously in advanced age; the “fine old woman” mentioned by Moore in his *Diary* of February 1828, when fifteen more years had passed over her. Then came the Princesses, aunt and niece, twenty years between them. Princess Mary, soon to be Duchess of Gloucester, beautiful, generous, loving; and the young culprit Charlotte, fresh and graceful, trembling, and with a little flush of affront upon her smooth cheek, but quiet and self-possessed in demeanour. To complete the group, two awful presences. A King, or almost such, fifty years old, troubled and furious, of strikingly handsome aspect and with the most practised and perfect resources of manner, action, and deportment, and a Lord Chancellor of sixty-two, to a girl of seventeen venerable, alarming, and embodying the law of England; bristling with the talent of learning which had assisted the son of the Newcastle coal merchant to his extraordinary rise in life. All these personages except two, the good and lovely Princess Mary and the kind-hearted Lady de Clifford, were there to crush the young Princess impotent against them.”

The Prince Regent began by angrily refusing her request; then Lord Eldon, in a rough, bullying manner, explained that the law of England would not allow



the young Princess what she demanded, and on the Prince asking what he [Lord Eldon] would have done as a father, the Chancellor curtly answered, "If she had been my daughter I would have locked her up." This commonplace parental advice coming on the top of the terrors of the law sounds very much like a step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and it failed in its intended effect, for the Princess was not frightened into submission.

Charlotte heard the bearish Eldon perfectly unmoved and made no answer, but for all that the brutal words penetrated her armour, and when she afterwards went into the room of one of her aunts she burst into tears and exclaimed, "What would the King say if he could know that his granddaughter had been compared to the granddaughter of a collier?" There was truth in the appellation, for Lord Eldon's grandfather began life as clerk to a north-country "fitter," the name given to the person who bought and sold coals between the owner of mines and the shippers, and who conveyed them in "keels" or barges from the higher parts of the Tyne to Newcastle or Shields, where they were loaded for exportation.

From an entry in Lady Charlotte Campbell's diary it is pretty evident that the Prince's anger had a cause other than his daughter's obstinacy. There were intrigues outside, the object of which was to evade his decree prohibiting mother and daughter meeting. Lady Charlotte writes: "The Princess told me 'that everything was going on as she wished—that they were playing her game—that she had the cards in her own hands,' and a great many more mystical nothings with which she deceives herself, and fancies she deceives others. The only facts I could catch hold of were, that Lady de Clifford had resigned, and that the Duchess of Leeds was proposed to succeed her as governess to Princess Charlotte, but that she [the Princess of Wales] as well as Lady de Clifford had

advised the young Princess never to allow another governess to come near her; a piece of advice, I conclude, which tallies too well with her own inclinations for her to disregard it. What interest Lady de Clifford could have in this advice, I know not, unless it were the vanity of saying 'Princess Charlotte never had any governess after me.' Then continued her Royal Highness, 'Mr. Brougham has written me a letter of twelve pages, which, as soon as he returns to town, when Parliament meets, I am to send to the Regent and the Chancellor, respecting my cruel situation, and my not being permitted to see my daughter—to which letter he must give some answer; but I have taken care to write a copy of it to the Ministers also, well knowing that he would put the paper in his pocket and never say more about it.' "

The scene between father and daughter must have been more violent than one can gather from Miss Knight, who had the information second-hand, and on February 13 Lady Charlotte writes: "The Princess came to me yesterday in a great bustle, as though she were 'big with the fate of Cato and of Rome.' She had received another letter from her daughter: such a character, such firmness; such determination! She was enchanted. The Prince had been with the Chancellor to Windsor, and in presence of the Queen, demanded what she [Charlotte] meant by refusing to have a governess. She referred him entirely to her letter—upon which the Queen and her father abused her, as being an obstinate, perverse, headstrong girl. 'Besides,' said the Prince, 'I know all that passed in Windsor Park; and if it were not for my clemency, I would shut you up for life. Depend upon it, as long as I live you shall never have an establishment, unless you marry.' . . . 'Charlotte never spoke a word or moved a muscle,' said the Princess of Wales; and the Prince and the Chancellor departed as they came. Nothing could be more determined or immovable

than she was : in short, we must frighten the man into doing something, otherwise he will do nothing ; and, if mother and daughter cannot do this, nothing can. On Sunday I shall send my letter—but I do not think gentle means will ever avail. If we were in past times——’ and her Royal Highness looked quite fearful as she spoke ! ”

What “passed in Windsor Park” that the Prince knew finds a probable explanation in an entry in the Greville papers in reference to Captain Hesse, to whom allusion has already been made, as one of the Princess Charlotte’s admirers. According to Greville the introduction of Hesse to the young Princess was an “atrocity” of the Princess of Wales. She employed him to convey letters to her daughter while she used to ride in Windsor Park, which he contrived to deliver and occasionally to converse with her, and on one occasion at Kensington the Princess of Wales brought them together in her own room. “The Princess [Charlotte] also wrote him some letters,” says Greville, “not containing much harm, but idle and improper. When the Duke of York’s affair with Mrs. Clarke came out and all the correspondence, she became very much alarmed, told Miss Mercer [Elphinstone] the whole story and employed her to get back her letters to Hesse. She accordingly wrote to Hesse (he was then in Spain), but he evinced disinclination to give them up. On his return to England she threatened to put the affair into the Duke of York’s hands, which frightened him, and then he surrendered them, signing a paper declaring he had given up everything. The King afterwards heard of this affair, and questioning the Princess she told him everything. He sent for Miss Mercer and desired to see the letters and then to keep them. This she refused. This Captain Hesse was a short plump vulgar-looking man, afterwards a lover of the Queen of Naples.”

Captain Gronow’s account of this delicate matter

does not quite accord with that of Greville. Captain Hesse was an intimate friend of Gronow's, and he was generally believed to be a son of the Duke of York by a German lady of rank. Whether this was so or not, he in early youth lived with the Duke and Duchess of York, and was treated by them in a manner which indicated more than ordinary regard. He was gazetted a cornet in the 18th Hussars at seventeen years of age, and was present at the battle of Vittoria, when he was severely wounded in the wrist. "On this becoming known in England, a royal lady wrote to Lord Wellington, requesting that he might be carefully attended to, and at the same time a watch with her portrait was forwarded, which was delivered to the wounded hussar by Wellington himself." Who the "royal lady" was can be imagined by Gronow's statement that "the Prince Regent sent the late Admiral Lord Keith [the father of Miss Mercer Elphinstone] to Hesse's lodgings, who demanded in his Royal Highness's name the restitution of the watch and letters which had been sent him when in Spain. After a considerable amount of hesitation, the Admiral obtained what he wanted the following day; whereupon Lord Keith assured him that the Prince Regent would never forget so great a mark of confidence, and that the heir to the throne would ever afterwards be his friend. I regret to say from personal knowledge that upon this occasion the Prince behaved most ungratefully and unfeelingly, for after having obtained all he wanted he refused to receive Hesse at Carlton House. . . . His romantic career terminated by his being killed in a duel by Count Leon, natural son of the first Napoleon."

Things were now drifting into a most uncomfortable state. Neither side would give way, and as practically a deadlock had come about, the useful "friend of the family," Sir Henry Halford, was called in to assist in adjusting matters. The medical diplomatist suggested a compromise. A happy thought—why



"THE DEVONSHIRE MINUET."



should not the Duchess of Leeds alone have the name of governess and the Princess have two ladies to be called "lady companions"? This suggestion was accepted by the Princess—it was indeed the only thing she could do—and then followed a long and intriguing business as to who should be appointed.

Meanwhile the news of Charlotte's capitulation had reached her mother. It "occasioned a great bustle," writes her lady-in-waiting, "and some tears to the Princess of Wales, who is in despair, for the young Princess consents to receive the Duchess of Leeds as her governess, after all her violent objections to do so. This circumstance decided the Princess of Wales on sending off her own letter directly to the Regent per messenger"—a letter which proved not to have the least effect.

Throughout the business Queen Charlotte's conduct was anything but commendable. Miss Knight was one of the "lady companions" chosen, but she was in the service of her Majesty, and the Queen meant to keep her there if she could. The old woman was far too crafty to let her intention be known, and she wrote secretly to Miss Knight virtually ordering her not to accept the post, but at the same time insinuating that Miss Knight must make it appear that the refusal came from herself. The reason of this scheming was that the Queen did not want to offend the Prince, who was in favour of the appointment.

Miss Knight, much against her will, obeyed her mistress, but her refusal was not accepted—perhaps the Prince saw through the manœuvre—and the negotiations had to be gone over *de novo*. Miss Knight's words, describing an interview she had with the Queen at this time, are significant enough. "Our conversation was very *gênante*," she says, "till at last we got on the subject of the Princess Charlotte. The Queen spoke of her with all the prejudice and enmity

which she had for years imbibed against her, related to me all that had passed between her and the Chancellor, and considered her dignified behaviour as hardness of heart."

After a good deal of hesitation Miss Knight was tempted to leave the Queen's service and enter that of the Prince, and by way of conciliation suggested some arrangements which she thought would soothe the mortified old lady, "particularly the loan of one thousand pounds without interest," a sum which the Queen was at the time very desirous of obtaining. The offer of an opportune loan in addition to the salary which she gave up, besides the house "which she might let, would set her [the Queen] completely at liberty in respect to Frogmore and the farm." So Miss Knight reasonably thought, but she was wrong, and not even an appeal to Charlotte's ruling passion, avarice, could remove the affront.

Miss Knight received two answers to her letter; "both were resentful and bitter to a high degree," and, much upset at the treatment she had received, the newly appointed "lady companion" took her departure, met the Princess Charlotte at Warwick House, and was welcomed "in the most gracious and cordial manner." Before leaving Windsor Miss Knight wrote "a respectful letter to the Queen, expressive of the deepest regret at having offended her and of the sincerest attachment," but the irate old lady vouchsafed no reply.



## CHAPTER XVIII

1813

Princess Charlotte disobeys the orders of the Regent—Visits her mother at Kensington Palace—Rudeness of the Regent to Lady de Clifford—Warwick House and its accommodation—Rules laid down for the “government” of Princess Charlotte—A dreary dinner party at Carlton House—Charlotte and the Duke of Gloucester—Eldon’s “conviviality”—His meanness—Princess Charlotte at a Carlton House ball.

**I**N spite of the Prince’s efforts to separate mother and daughter, the two combined to disobey his orders, as one might expect they would. Previous to Charlotte’s departure from Windsor to reside in Warwick House, she went to Kensington Palace, where she knew the Princess of Wales would be. Lady Charlotte Campbell says that a lady of title who was present when the girl arrived told her that Charlotte rushed up to her mother, and said, “For God’s sake be civil to her,” meaning the Duchess of Leeds, who followed her. “Lady —— said she felt sorry for the latter, but when the Princess of Wales talked to her, she soon became so free and easy that one could not have any feeling about her feelings. Princess Charlotte . . . was looking handsome, very pale, but her head more becomingly dressed, that is to say, less dressed than usual. Her figure is of that full, round shape which is now in its prime; but she disfigures herself by wearing her bodice so short, that she literally has no waist. Her feet are very pretty, and so are her hands and arms, and her ear and the shape of

her head. Her countenance is expressive when she allows her passions to play upon it, but I never saw any face with so little shade express so many powerful and varied emotions. Lady —— told me [Lady Charlotte Campbell] that the Princess Charlotte talked to her about her situation, and said, in a very quiet but determined way, she would not bear it, and that as soon as Parliament met, she intended to come to Warwick House, and remain there; that she was also determined not to consider the Duchess of Leeds as her governess, but only as her first lady. She made many observations on other persons and subjects, and appears to be very quick, very penetrating, but imperious and wilful. There is a tone of romance, too, in her character which will only serve to mislead her.”

“She told her mother that there had been a great battle at Windsor, between the Queen and the Prince; the former refusing to give up Miss Knight from her own person, to attend on Princess Charlotte as sub-governess; but the Prince Regent had gone to Windsor himself, and insisted on her doing so, and the ‘Old Begum,’ was forced to submit, but has been ill ever since; and Sir Henry Halford declared it was a complete breaking up of her constitution (to the great delight of the two Princesses, who were talking about this affair). Miss Knight was the very person they wished to have: they think they can do as they like with her. It had been ordered that the Princess Charlotte should not see her mother alone for a single moment, but the latter went into her room, stuffed a pair of large shoes full of papers, and, having given them to her daughter, she went home. Lady —— told me everything was written down, and sent to Mr. Brougham next day.” From this talk we gather the reason why the Prince was so anxious to appoint Miss Knight—“they think they can do as they like with her.”

The Prince's treatment of Lady de Clifford was quite typical of one of his characteristics. Not long after her dismissal she received to her surprise a royal command for a party at Carlton House. She took her card of invitation to her son, Lord de Clifford, who prevailed upon her to go, and accompanied her to the Palace. When the Regent entered the drawing-room, the company ranged themselves into the usual court circle, and his Royal Highness proceeded to address every guest in turn with that gracefulness of manner for which he stood unrivalled. But when he came to Lady de Clifford he turned his back upon her, and thus showed to the assembled courtiers his idea of the manner in which "the first gentleman of Europe" ought to behave to a lady.

A meeting, purely accidental, between Charlotte and her mother became the talk of London. The young Princess was returning to Warwick House on the morning of March 9, 1813, and while the carriage was going down Constitution Hill, she saw her mother, also in her carriage, proceeding along Piccadilly towards Hyde Park. Immediately ordering her coachman to turn round, her carriage overtook that of the Princess Caroline in Hyde Park near the bridge. The royal mother and daughter from the windows affectionately embraced each other, and continued in earnest conversation for about ten minutes. The cartoonist, as will be noted, found an effective subject for his pencil.

Warwick House, in which Princess Charlotte, Miss Knight, and a staff of old family servants were the only residents, stood at the end of Warwick Street, which then led from Cockspur Street towards Carlton House Terrace, and terminated in a *cul de sac*. It was an old, moderate-sized dwelling, miserably out of repair, and plain to ugliness. Its situation was at the extremity of a narrow lane with a small courtyard and gates, at which two sentinels were placed. Evidently its isolation was one of the reasons why it was selected,

for in itself it was anything but suitable for a royal residence.

The interior accommodation was very meagre. On the ground floor was a hall, dining-room, library, comptroller's room, and two very small rooms with a good staircase, and two back staircases very much the reverse. Above was what was called the waiting-room, of very moderate dimensions, where Princess Charlotte took her lessons in the morning. Miss Knight's sitting-room and bedroom were both very small; and the drawing-room and Princess Charlotte's bedroom, with bay windows, looked on a small garden, with a wall and a road dividing it from the gardens of Carlton House, to which there was a door of communication.

Despite its resemblance to a small convent, this residence was a seat of happiness compared with the Lower Lodge at Windsor. Never was a girl the subject of such elaborate precautions. The rules laid down for her life were precise to rigidity. She and Miss Knight were to be one week in town and one at Windsor, and when in town they were to dine at Carlton House. They were also graciously permitted to go to the play and opera, and to have a party at Warwick House occasionally, besides going to balls and great parties at Carlton House.

Two days after taking up their residence at Warwick House the Princess and her lady companion dined with the Prince Regent, Miss Knight being presented to the Prince in form. The only other lady present was Miss Goldsworthy, an amiable person with an embarrassing habit of falling asleep at the dinner table. Miss Goldsworthy in her early days had been governess to Queen Charlotte's daughters, and was a great favourite with the Princesses, who called her by a pet name, "Gooley."

Miss Knight found the lower apartments of Carlton House, in one of which the dinner was served, close

and too warm. The Prince did the honours of his house well, "though not with sufficient ease, and rather with assumed than real self-possession. He talked but little to Princess Charlotte, and not with the manner and voice of affection." His greatest attentions were for Miss Goldsworthy, which, says Miss Knight in her dry way, "in one point of view was amiable," and it certainly was, for the good old lady, in addition to her propensity for dozing at unexpected moments, was very deaf.

There was considerable method in the Prince's behaviour. His marked indifference to his daughter and her companion was to be part of his new plan, which was to keep the Princess Charlotte as long as possible a child; and consequently whoever belonged to her was to be thought a nurse or a preceptress. It was all very petty and contemptible, but quite in keeping with the puzzling attitude taken up by the Prince towards his daughter throughout her life.

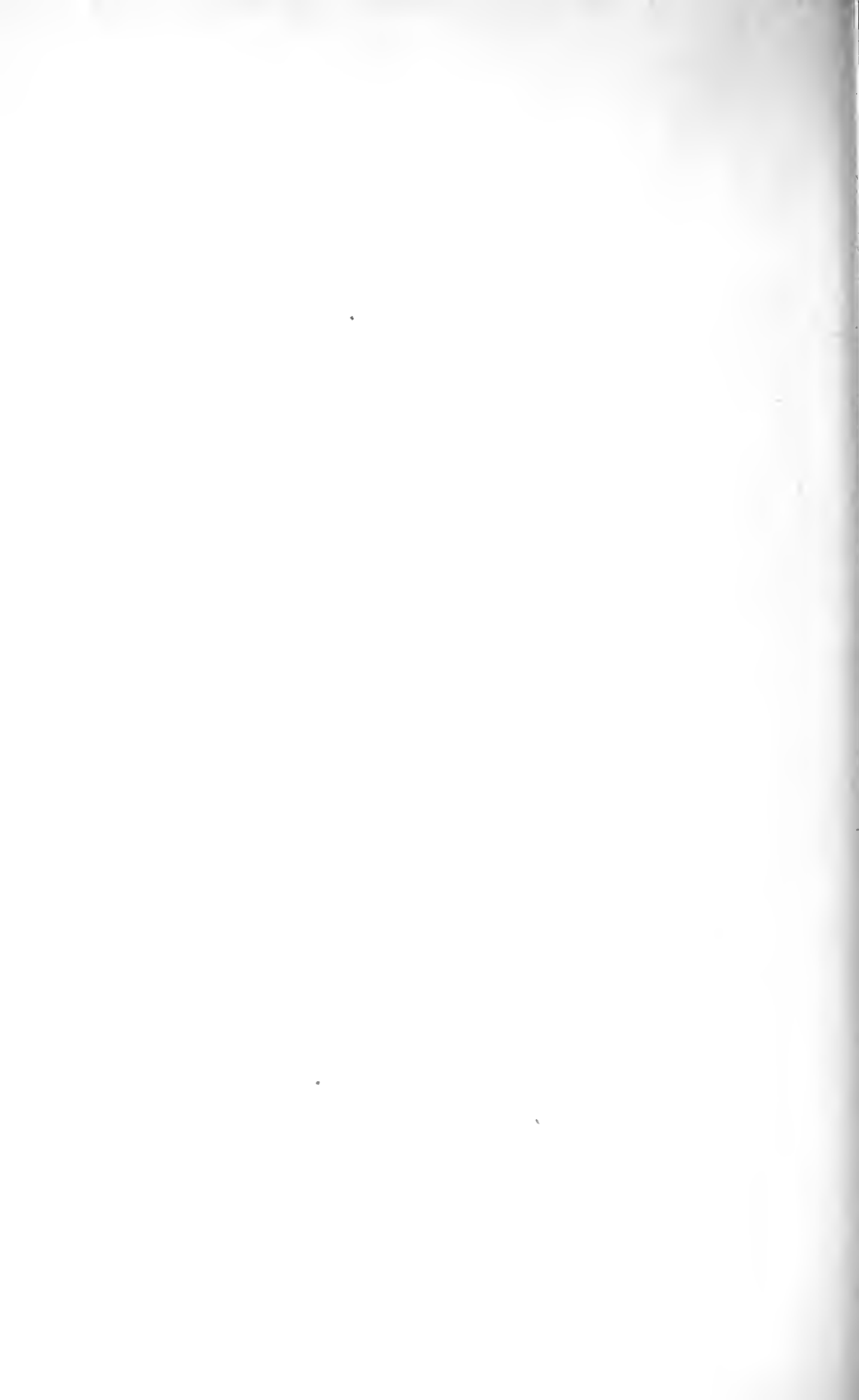
To carry out the absurd scheme of trying to make a girl of seventeen, who looked and thought like a woman of twenty-five, fancy she was still a child involved considerable alterations in the method of education hitherto pursued. The King's ideas seven years before on the subject of training his granddaughter were more fitted for a boy than a girl. In the early days of her girlhood the Prince made no objection to the curriculum, indeed he even ordered that she was to study politics—of course of his own way of thinking. But as years went on his Royal Highness changed his views, and as by this time Princess Charlotte, in understanding, penetration, and judgment, if not in years, was a woman, and capable of forming opinions for herself, the new plan of sending her back to the nursery was adopted, and everything was done to promote it: as, for instance, the proposition that when in town she should give parties of young ladies not presented—that is to say, children's balls!

It is hardly necessary to add that the process of "keeping down" so self-willed a young lady was approved by the Queen, and the poor over-governed Princess was greatly hurt by being thus treated. In spite of the arrangement that Miss Knight should be Charlotte's lady companion, efforts were made to keep on the old title of "sub-governess," and so that there should be no doubt about it a paragraph appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* to that effect. Miss Knight was greatly incensed, and begged Sir Henry Halford to mention the matter to the Prince, and have the statement contradicted. This was done, the Prince remarking ironically that they might as well call Miss Knight Lord Chancellor.

On February 3 the Princess went to dine with the Duke and Duchess of York to meet the Queen and Princesses, and Miss Knight was asked for the evening, for the reason that the dining-room was so small that it would not hold even the Princesses' and Duchess's ladies. The Prince of Wales shook hands with Miss Knight and whispered something which she did not catch. She asked Princess Mary in the course of the evening what the Prince said, and she answered, "Oh, nothing; he is only afraid lest Charlotte should like the Duke of Gloucester, but there is no danger. He wanted me to tell you to be on your guard." This precaution was superfluous. Princess Mary was engaged to the Duke and afterwards married him. According to Raikes, the Duke "was not a man of talent, as may be inferred from his nickname 'Silly Billy.'"

It was no unusual thing at this date for gentlemen at dinner parties to pay too much attention to the bottle, and Miss Knight gives an instance which occurred at this particular function, in the person of Lord Eldon. "While I was talking to the Misses Fitzroy and others," she writes, "the Chancellor came up to me and began to shake me violently by the hand, which rather surprised me, as we had never been







introduced to each other. He was not quite sober. He said he hoped I did not believe all the nonsense about his ill-treatment of Princess Charlotte, of which no doubt I had heard a lamentable story, and was going on when I stopped him by saying that Princess Charlotte had not conversed with me at all on the subject, and that if any one had mentioned it to me, it was the Queen. Not content with this, he came up to me in the same manner after the Royal Family had gone down to supper, and entered again on the subject in a very confused tone. I put him off by saying that really it was not my business to interfere in the Prince Charlotte's concerns; that I had only the honour of attending her, and that the Duchess of Leeds was the person who had the responsibility. This I said in a good-humoured way, and got rid of him at last."

This was not the only occasion on which Lord Chancellor Eldon in company showed the effects of too much conviviality. Once when he and the Archbishop of Canterbury were dining with the King, Eldon became rather confidential and merry over his port. At last he burst out, "It's a curious fact that your Majesty's Archbishop and your Majesty's Lord Chancellor both married their wives clandestinely! I had some excuse, for Bessie Surtees was the prettiest girl in all Newcastle, but Mrs. Sutton was always the same pumpkin-faced thing she is at present!" One would give much to know what Dr. Manners Sutton said in reply to this piece of coarse criticism; his rejoinder, if he made one, is left unrecorded.

Lord Eldon was noted for his saving habits, a characteristic which he shared with his brother Sir William Scott, and which extended to their wives. On one occasion, after Sir William and Lady Scott had been staying for a week at a large house in the country, Lady Scott came down to her hostess with arms extended, carrying a huge number of towels. "Madam,

look here!" she said. "I think it my duty to make you aware of the extravagance of your housemaids. Day after day I have locked up useless towels that have been put into my own and Sir William's rooms, yet they were always replaced. Look at all this linen, ma'am—towel upon towel, and during all this week *one* has served us both!" This is very praiseworthy as an example of thrift if not of cleanliness; but what was the opinion of the housemaid? It must have puzzled her sorely to know what became of the towels she had every morning to replace.

The Hon. Amelia Murray, who was at school with the daughter of the Chancellor, gives an amusing instance of Lord Eldon's parsimony. It was at the time of a court mourning; the Chancellor's family had to wear black, and that his daughter might not be wasteful, his lordship enclosed a piece of red tape in a letter he wrote to the girl on the subject, together with instructions that she was to measure carefully the length of her petticoat, so that only the exact quantity of bombazine needed should be sent! The girl once told Miss Murray that she and her mother had only one bonnet between them. Eldon was not the only mean lawyer of his day, if Jekyl's assertion be true that Lord Chief Justice Kenyon's death was due to his eating piecrust at breakfast in order to save the expense of muffins!

Mr. Cyrus Redding speaks of occasionally looking in at the Chancery Court, "where Lord Eldon sat working a loose tooth in the front of his jaw with his finger and thumb, as if to beguile the time the counsel expended in making law victims of the future from the examples of the past." Mr. Redding goes on to say: "Loyola and Lord Eldon were ever connected in my mind. His words were no index of his real feelings. He had a sterile soul for all things earthly but money, doubts, and the art of drawing briefs. I wondered how Romilly could argue

so long about nothing, as he often did in that court. I remember too that Eldon used to steal into the George Coffee-house at the top of the Haymarket to get a pint of wine, Lady Eldon not permitting him to enjoy it in peace at home. I once saw a letter from Herbert Croft [who wrote the Life of Young, for Johnson's "Lives of the Poets"], in which Croft, who expected much from Lord Thurlow only to be disappointed, called him [Croft] 'a d——d fool for quitting the bar for the church,' on which Scott [afterwards Lord Eldon] said to Croft, 'By Jove! I shall soon follow your example, if not to take orders, at least to be a country counsel in some corner of my native county.' Happy would this have been for many persons had it taken place. 'You'll do wrong,' said Croft. 'Your perseverance will secure your success.' This was in 1781, and twenty years after, thanks to his plodding and tenacity of purpose, not unassisted by his pliancy before those who had the power to give the good things he desired, Scott became Lord Chancellor." Redding adds, "His mind was narrow; a dozen miles seemed to his scope the dimensions of a world."

Although Eldon was constantly called in by the Prince to assist him in his frequent battles with the Princess, the latter bore him no ill-will. Brougham says she always spoke of him with great kindness, only she called him "Old Baggs," as all the Royal Family did, which once caused a droll mistake when the Regent said, "Send for old Baggs," and the page-in-waiting summoned Mr. Banks, who came in court dress and was kept waiting in the ante-chamber till the mistake was discovered, which, it is said, he did not soon forgive."

Three days after the dinner at the Duke of York's, Princess Charlotte went to a ball at Carlton House. It was, according to all accounts, a solemn affair, very different from some other of the Prince's festive gatherings. Miss Berry, who was present, says that

it " was all very magnificent, but such a lack of dancing young men and, indeed, women, I quite pitied the Princess Charlotte from the bottom of my heart for the dulness of the ball—such it appeared to me. What must it not have been to youth—and intelligent youth? I think her quite charming, and in all respects as to appearance far exceeding whatever I had heard of her. I much regretted not having it in my power in any way to make myself known to her; for probably I should have received a gracious word or so. But I was near her very often, and could therefore make all my observations. Her manner seems open, frank, and intelligent; she will captivate many a heart, or I am much mistaken."

## CHAPTER XIX

1813

Princess Charlotte at the opening of Parliament—The Regent displeased—His strange conversation with Miss Knight—Old quarrels renewed—The Princess Caroline not allowed to see her daughter—Caroline publishes her letter of remonstrance in the *Morning Chronicle*—Brougham's account of the matter—Professor Clerici's speculations once more—The Regent's unexpected visit to Warwick House—A stormy scene.

THE early part of 1813 marked a further advance of the Princess Charlotte towards public life, and she was present at the opening of Parliament by the Prince Regent. Lady Charlotte Campbell describes the visit in these terms :

“The Princess Charlotte was at the House, and sat on the woolsack, near the throne; two of the Princesses came from Windsor to accompany her. It was remarked that she talked and laughed much, turned her back often upon papa, and had a certain expressive smile during the speech, which did not displease all the lords, nor all the ladies there. The Prince, it is said, was much displeased at her manner; in addition to which the Princess Charlotte spoke to Lord Erskine, and nodded to Lord Jersey; but those from whom I heard this seemed to be diverted only at what had passed, and attached no blame to her Royal Highness. The Prince was flurried and nervous, both in going to and returning from the House, but delivered his speech well. By the people he was received with dead silence, and not a hat off; some marks of disapprobation even, with scarcely

any loyal greeting; only a few plaudits as he went through the Horse Guards—no general burst of popular applause.”

The uneasiness of the Regent can be well understood. He probably had become convinced that, sooner or later, Charlotte was certain to assert herself, and that not only would he have his wife as his constant foe, but that she would be materially assisted by the fearless young Princess. There was also the mystery of the wedding-night in the background! That one is entitled to assume this is warranted by a glimpse of his state of mind which one gets from a chance conversation Miss Knight had with him during a dinner party at Carlton House. It is impossible not to see some sinister significance in the Regent's words on this occasion when read by the light of Professor Clerici's speculations concerning the “mystery.”

“The Prince took me aside this evening,” writes Miss Knight, “and talked to me for a long while against the Princess of Wales and the little regard she had for Princess Charlotte when a child, and how by her negligence there was a mark of the small-pox on Princess Charlotte's nose, having left her hands at liberty; whereas he used continually to watch beside her cradle. He said very severe things of the Princess of Wales in every way, and even accused her of threatening to declare that *Princess Charlotte was not his daughter!* I really had not remarked this little blemish on the smooth and beautiful skin of my young Princess, and should have had great difficulty in forbearing to smile at the seriousness with which that important misfortune was mentioned, if I had not been horrified by the rest of the conversation.”

What could have been the motive of the Prince in talking in this strain, and of all persons in the world to Miss Knight, the companion of his daughter?

If he were trying to justify his conduct, he was taking a most extraordinary course, considering that he could not be sure that Miss Knight would not repeat the conversation to the Princess. Even though he had the utmost confidence in Charlotte's lady companion, his remarks were wholly superfluous and in the worst taste. It was evident, however, that some deep-seated grievance was simmering in the Prince's mind, for very soon after this dinner the Princess Charlotte found herself in the thick of the old quarrel. First, there was some misunderstanding about a dinner at the Duchess of York's, whose invitation Charlotte had accepted without consulting the Duchess of Leeds. Sir Henry Halford, who was always called in when anything went wrong, whether with the tempers of the Royalties or their bodies, smoothed matters over, but it was not long before something much more serious happened. This was Princess Caroline's celebrated remonstrance, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, setting tongues wagging faster than ever over the interminable question of the Prince Regent's matrimonial squabbles.

The remonstrance was prefaced by a letter which Caroline wrote to the Queen in the previous November. This letter has never been made public, and a copy not being found among Brougham's papers it may be presumed to have been lost or destroyed. Brougham, who had now openly enlisted himself among the Princess's adherents, described it as a "tickler," and no doubt it was, for the Prince with some difficulty was persuaded by Lords Eldon and Liverpool to read it, and sent to Princess Charlotte to know who wrote it; while the Duke of Kent "blessed his stars it had not been written to him, so he was relieved from having to answer it, which he should not have known how to do."

The following extract from a letter of Brougham to Lord Grey, in reference to the crisis produced

by the Princess of Wales's manifesto, is full of interest as throwing a light on what was passing in Charlotte's mind at the time, and how her character was developing.

"The Princess," Brougham writes, "addressed a long and very firm remonstrance to the Queen last Saturday (which I had revised and altered materially) relative to the Princess Charlotte and their being kept separate, and the plan pursued for interrupting her education and keeping her in close confinement.

"The Queen's answer is full of lies and evasions, and the Princess's letter is now with the Prince.

"On Perceval's death, a box of the Princess's papers, kept by him to prevent the Prince from seizing them, got into some foreign lady's hands, who is a partisan of the Princess; at least so I gather from what has happened: for this person last week called at my chambers in the dusk, and left them sealed up with an anonymous letter, strongly persuading their immediate publication. I have read them, returned them with an answer, expressing my indignation at such an attempt being made to involve me in any mysterious transaction, especially one where some breach of trust appears to form a link of the communication. But I advised that they should be immediately sent to the Princess, and proper steps taken in the matter with her authority.

"I half suspect that she is at the bottom of the whole, but this I can't be sure of. At all events, my answer would have been the same of course.

"Now for the papers. They are a series of letters from her to the Prince, and many long ones from him to her, relating to Lady Jersey and the other old disputes; then curious ones from the King to her, some of them bearing hard on the Prince, also from Thurlow, etc.; with two cabinet minutes of April 21, 1807, by all the Ministers except Perceval, fully acquitting her, and desiring her to be received publicly at Court.





PRINCE LEOPOLD OF SAXE-COBURG-SAALEFELD.



“The advice I am disposed to give is this: that an able narrative be drawn up, with a proper selection from the papers, and suppression of private names, if this is deemed advisable. The Princess will do whatever is thought best.

“I must tell you that the Princess Charlotte is extremely solicitous that her mother should be openly vindicated, and the Princess's wish for this proceeds almost as much from the desire of gratifying her as of punishing her husband. The young one is quite furious at their treatment of her. I mean Queen, Princesses, Dukes, and her father as much as any. She says she complained of her letters being opened at the post-office by his orders, which he denied circumstantially; and that she pressed him until she was obliged to stop, to avoid the unpleasant necessity of convicting him of a plain lie. This is her own story. As for the confinement at Windsor, she entertained a plan for escaping as soon as she was of age (for she conceives she is so next birthday—very falsely in point of law). She also desired my advice on this and other matters, and I am to write a representation as strongly as possible against it.”

At the end of this letter Brougham says: “You have seen so much ill in one heir-apparent that I think I see you scouting all idea of a *popular Queen*.” Whatever doubt Lord Grey may have had as to the fitness of Charlotte to occupy the throne, that doubt was not shared by Brougham. He had a very high opinion of the young Princess's abilities.

The outcome of the correspondence with the Queen was very unsatisfactory; the Princess of Wales determined to write to the Regent, and the result was the letter, which the Prince refused to open, and which, as stated above, was published in the *Morning Chronicle*.

This letter is too well known to need reproduction in its entirety; but it is desirable to give the first

portion for the reason that it contains not only the salient points of the Princess's appeal, but because a certain passage seems to have a bearing upon Clerici's subtle speculations. The "remonstrance" begins thus :

"SIR,—

"It is with great reluctance that I presume to intrude myself upon your Royal Highness, and to solicit your attention to matters which may, at first, appear rather of a personal than a public nature. If I could think them so, if they related merely to myself, I should abstain from a proceeding which might give uneasiness, or interrupt the more weighty occupations of your Royal Highness's time ; I should continue in silence and retirement to lead the life which has been prescribed to me, and console myself for the loss of that society and those domestic comforts to which I have been so long a stranger *by the reflection that it has been deemed proper I should be afflicted, without any fault of my own, and that your Royal Highness knows it.*

"But, Sir, there are considerations of a higher nature than any regard to my own happiness which render this address a duty both to myself and my daughter ; may I venture to say a duty also to my husband and the people committed to his care ? There is a point beyond which a guiltless woman cannot with safety carry her forbearance ; if her honour is invaded, the defence of her reputation is no longer a matter of choice ; and it signifies not whether the attack be made openly, manfully, and directly, or by secret insinuations, and by holding such conduct towards her as countenances all the suspicions that malice can suggest. If these ought to be the feelings of every woman in England who is conscious she deserves no reproach, your Royal Highness has too much judgment and too nice a

sense of honour not to perceive how much more justly they belong to the mother of your daughter—the mother of her who is destined, I trust at a very distant period, to reign over the British empire.

"It may be known to your Royal Highness that during the continuance of the restrictions upon your royal authority I was still inclined to delay taking this step, in the hope that I might owe the redress I sought to your gracious and unsolicited condescension. I have waited in the fond indulgence of this expectation, until, to my inexpressible mortification, I find that my unwillingness to complain has only produced fresh grounds of complaint; and I am at length compelled either to abandon all regard to the two dearest objects which I possess on earth—mine own honour and my beloved child—or to throw myself at the feet of your Royal Highness, the natural protector of both.

"I presume, Sir, to represent to your Royal Highness that the separation, which every succeeding month is making wider, of the mother and the daughter is equally injurious to my character and to her education. I say nothing of the deep wound which so cruel an arrangement inflicts upon my feelings, although I would fain hope that few persons will be found of a disposition to think lightly of this. To see myself cut off from one of the very few domestic enjoyments left me—certainly the only one upon which I set any value, the society of my child—involves me in such misery as I well know your Royal Highness never could inflict upon me, if you were aware of its bitterness. Our intercourse has been gradually diminished; a single interview weekly seemed sufficiently hard allowance for a mother's affections: that, however, was reduced to our meeting once a fortnight; and I now learn that even this most rigorous interdiction is to be still more rigidly enforced. But while I do not venture to intrude my feelings as a mother upon your Royal Highness's notice, I must be allowed

to say, that in the eyes of an observing and jealous world this separation of a daughter from her mother will only admit of one construction fatal to the mother's reputation. Your Royal Highness will also pardon me for adding that there is no less inconsistency than injustice in this treatment. He who dares to advise your Royal Highness to overlook the evidence of my innocence, and disregard the sentence of complete acquittal which it produced, or is wicked and false enough still to whisper suspicions in your ear, betrays his duty to you, Sir, to your daughter, and to your people, if he counsels you to permit a day to pass without a further investigation of my conduct. I know that no such calumniator will venture to recommend a measure which must speedily end in his utter confusion.

“Then let me implore you to reflect on the situation in which I am placed: without the shadow of a charge against me; without even an accuser; after an inquiry that led to my ample vindication, yet treated as if I were still more culpable than the perjuries of my suborned traducers represented me, holding me up to the world as a mother who may not enjoy the society of her only child.”

How much of the above is Brougham's and how much is the Princess's it is of course impossible to decide, but we venture to suggest that the conclusion of the first paragraph is Caroline's own. The passage italicised is not underlined in the original, but we distinguish it thus because it seems to echo a reminiscence of something which the Princess wished her husband also to remember. The words “he knows it” suggest an emphasis to which Clerici's hypotheses may have supplied the key.

On the publication of the Princess Caroline's letter, the Prince was furious, and down came “general utility” M'Mahon to Miss Knight, with a command

from the Prince to write a note to the lady-in-waiting of the Princess of Wales to say that, "in the absence of the Duchess of Leeds, she was commanded to inform her that Princess Charlotte could not dine at Kensington that day, as had been intended."

No wonder the poor young Princess was thrown into "agonies of grief" by all these turmoils, and exclaimed that she "could not have three days' peace, and that she was always trembling for what was to come."

The Prince had been stung into active reprisals, and his idea was to attack his wife through her daughter. He called at Warwick House with Lord Liverpool, and while the latter held an embarrassed conversation with Miss Knight, the Prince talked with his daughter in the room above. Presently Miss Knight and her visitor received a summons to go upstairs. "I found," says Miss Knight, "the Regent and the Princess standing near the chimney. She looked penetrated with grief and spoke not a word. The Prince said he wished Lord Liverpool, as his confidential servant, and me, as the Princess Charlotte's friend, to hear him repeat what he had been saying to her, namely that an investigation was being made with respect to the conduct of her mother, on the result of which depended her being allowed to visit her again, and that in the meantime her usual visits must be suspended. . . . The Prince dismissed Lord Liverpool, saying that he would not detain him, as he knew he had much to do, and I saw Princess Charlotte in such distress, that I ventured to say I hoped the Prince would allow her to lie down. On this she roused herself, and with great dignity said she was not ill. However, the Prince soon after took his leave, and desired I would come with him.

"I followed him into the library, where he told me he was surprised at Charlotte's behaviour, for that she had taken everything he had said to her while they

were alone perfectly well. I answered that the Prince's own feelings would suggest to him that what her Royal Highness could bear from him she could not support to hear mentioned before subjects, and persons unconnected with the family; that I was sure of her attachment to him, but that if she did not feel for her mother (however guilty) she could not have the proper sentiments of a daughter for him. He took this remarkably well, and said he certainly felt for her, but it was better not to deceive her and that the business would end very seriously. He added that he had promised to communicate the result of the investigation, and would call the next day or the day after."

The Prince, however, did nothing of the kind, and Charlotte was a prey to intense anxiety. Plotting and intrigue were going on, but of what nature and for what purpose it is not possible at this distance to fathom. A significant fact is that Sir John and Lady Douglas, the authors of the dastardly conspiracy at Blackheath six years before, had reappeared on the scene and were lodging in Pall Mall; and not only this, but were constantly in communication with the people living at Carlton House.

Unable to restrain herself, Princess Charlotte wrote to the Prince Regent, and received a reply that it was better they should not meet at present, "as when all was settled they might meet afterwards." And so the girl was compelled to content her soul with patience.



## CHAPTER XX

1813

Charlotte's anxiety—Spies and the circulation of scandal—Insinuations against the Princess of Wales—A supposed new "inquiry"—An attempt to frighten Charlotte into submission—Heated debate in the House of Commons—Charlotte allowed to visit her mother—Miss Mercer Elphinstone Charlotte's intimate friend and confidant—Corporation of London present an address to Princess Caroline—The Regent's grim humour—The Vittoria fête at Carlton House—Princess Charlotte and the Duke of Devonshire—The Vauxhall fête—Intrigues to prevent Princess Charlotte being present defeated.

**D**OUBT and uncertainty affected the spirits of Princess Charlotte, and she had no heart to go out of doors. It was clear that she was being closely watched, for she soon after received a visit from some Court ladies, and was told that if she did not appear in public her character would be lost, for that the most injurious stories were being circulated about her and Captain Fitzclarence, one of the sons of the Duke of Clarence by Mrs. Jordan.

This was a most scandalous tale, and it looks very much as if the slippery tongues of the Douglasses had been at work. As the ladies who told the pleasing bit of information to the poor Princess were intimate friends of the Queen, it is not unreasonable to suppose that her Majesty was also acting in the matter.

The suggestion as to the desirability of showing herself Charlotte interpreted as a command. "While the Duchess of Leeds remained at Warwick House," says Miss Knight, "we went for a drive in the Park,

and at our return we learned that she [the Duchess] had been sent for to Carlton House. When she came back she told me that the Princess's affair had finished, and that the paper would be sent at eight o'clock, to be read to Princess Charlotte before her and me."

This, to say the least, was an objectionable arrangement, and Charlotte felt it to be so, for she told Miss Knight that "they should be alone, and that if Lord Liverpool or the Lord Chancellor came to read the paper, she would not listen to it, for that in her eyes her mother must be innocent. . . . At eight the paper came sealed and directed to the Duchess of Leeds, who arrived a moment after and who, with great delicacy, put it into the hands of Princess Charlotte, who from that moment always treated the Duchess with more cordiality than she had ever done before."

What did this precious paper contain? Nothing more than the result of the old investigation of 1806! The Prince had told a deliberate lie—not an uncommon thing with him—when he talked about an investigation going on. It was the ancient scandal which he had raked up and for a purpose. The object was obvious: he wanted to frighten the Princess into obedience, for attention was drawn in the paper to the advice of six years before, that the Princess should only be allowed to see her mother under certain restrictions.

The publication of the Princess of Wales's letter led to a heated debate in the House of Commons, when Mr. Whitbread, the Princess's staunch champion, "made the finest speech that ever was heard; most of his auditors were in tears," we are told; but with that we have nothing to do, except to remark that the Prince was afraid to go any further in the matter, so far as Charlotte was concerned, and she was allowed to visit her mother, who had temporarily gone back to Blackheath.



Paternal Protection.

RECONCILIATION OF THE REGENT AND PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

From a cartoon by Gillray.



It is worthy of note that by this time the Princess of Wales must have become quite hardened to the manœuvres of the Prince, for Miss Knight says, apropos of the Blackheath visit, that "the Princess of Wales looked better than I ever saw her." The intrigues of the Regent, however, were not at an end, and the next step was to send Miss Mercer Elphinstone, Charlotte's great friend, to visit the Princess. This visit was arranged with "conditions." Miss Elphinstone was only permitted to see the Princess so that she might use her influence to open her eyes to her mother's imprudence, and break the confidential intimacy between them. On this matter Lady Charlotte Campbell has something to say, and from the following entry in her "Diary" it would appear that the Princess of Wales was kept pretty well posted up in what went on at Warwick House: "I went to see Mrs. Rawdon," Lady Charlotte wrote; "her daughter is a beautiful girl, and very agreeable. The Princess Charlotte has taken a great fancy for her, and I am not surprised. She [Mrs. Rawdon] told me Miss E[lfhinstone] is not friendly to the Princess of Wales, and I fear it is so; for, since her return to the Princess Charlotte, the latter is not half so kind to her mother. Whoever busy themselves by depreciating a parent in a child's estimation are much to blame; for even where the parent is in fault, the child should never know it. It is a dangerous experiment to bid the offspring discriminate where its parent is in the right and where in the wrong. Very likely Miss E[lfhinstone] did not advise Princess Charlotte not to love her mother, but she probably told her, "She is imprudent, foolish; do not be guided by her."

Meanwhile public excitement was prodigious, and on April 2 the Corporation of London adopted an address, stating "the indignation and abhorrence" with which the Livery of London viewed "the foul conspiracy against the honour and life of her Royal

Highness, and their admiration at her moderation, frankness, and magnanimity under her long persecution." This address was presented in person by the Lord Mayor, and Miss Berry went to the Bayswater Gate in Kensington Gardens to see the sight.

"The crowd around the palace was great," she writes, "and kept increasing every moment, people here flocking through all the walks of the garden in file and in crowds, all coming to increase the enormous circle around the palace on the side of the Princess's apartment. Seeing the impossibility of getting nearer before it was too late, we left the garden by the little gate of the palace, and passing through the Duke of Kent's court, got into Lady Charlotte Lindsay's apartment. Arrived as far as the little drawing-room, we found nothing but preparations for a dinner of eight or ten people; but hearing sounds in the next room, I knocked at the door, and a voice which I recognised to be that of the Princess, called out to us to come in. We found the Princess with her three ladies, and Miss Hayman, all dressed, and eating in haste, awaiting the arrival of the Lord Mayor. . . . The Town Clerk read the address very well; and the Princess read her answer very well, though at the beginning the sentences were rather too long and difficult for her to pronounce well. She began in a low voice, which afterwards grew stronger. In the last part, where she spoke of her daughter, etc., she expressed herself with a good deal of feeling, and seemed to be moved, which had a very good effect, as well as the deliberate manner with which she dwelt upon that part in which she spoke of the rest of the Royal Family.

"After the address and answer the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen and the Livery-men kissed her hand, and went out by the little room to join their carriages in the Duke of Kent's court. When they were all gone, the crowd outside called so loudly for the

Princess, that her ladies begged of her to show herself at the middle window, and then at the doors, and then at the two ends of the apartment: this she did, accompanied by her ladies and conducted by her chamberlain, and having curtsied to the people immediately retired. I never saw a crowd that better deserved to have its wishes gratified, for it was not a common mob, but workmen, small tradesmen, mixed with well-dressed people and conducting themselves perfectly."

This triumph was some compensation for the many humiliations the Princess had gone through, but it was clear that the unequal struggle could not last much longer. She might have continued to fight the Regent had he been alone, but not when he was supported by the Ministry. When Miss Berry visited her on July 25, 1813, she found her "melancholy and almost in ill humour, now seeing more clearly the truth as to her position." Two months later we learn that she is "not very cheerful and appearing to find her situation more hopeless without the death of *one of the two*—which is very true."

Creevey chuckled immensely at the position of the Regent; and the matter is referred to in an amusing letter from Brougham: "The scene at Carlton House is quite perfect: there is nothing at all equal to it. I laughed for an hour. . . . The most curious [thing] is young P.'s letter to old P. which gave rise to all the row at Windsor. Notwithstanding the opening all letters, which we at first thought under the Duchess of L[ees] would have been terribly inconvenient, things have got back nearly into their old channel, for young P. contrived to send her mother a letter of twenty-eight pages and to receive from her the *Morning Chronicle* with all the articles about herself as well as the examination. Now these, I take it, are exactly what old P. would rather she did not see. She [Princess Charlotte] takes the most prodigious

interest in the controversy, and I am going to draw up a legal opinion respecting her case."

M'Mahon, who was always at hand when any dirty work was to be done, at this juncture comes upon the scene with his characteristic methods. Continuing the letter quoted above, Brougham says: "A strange attempt was made by M'Mahon to bribe and then bully the editor of the *Star* (which is greatly in the Princess's interest). He wanted him to insert a paragraph *against her*. Last Saturday he went again, and such a scene passed as I fain would send you, having before me the man's own written statement; but I dare not in case it is sent you. It began with inquiries and offers—to know the *advisers* of his paper on the subject of the Princess, and whether she had anything to say to it, and offers of paying for a paragraph; and ended with saying he should come again on Monday; and then going to see the press and talking to everyone of twenty printers and giving them two guineas to drink! We had a man to meet him and witness his bribery on Monday, and I expect his report."

Brougham's opinion of Charlotte, given in the same letter, is interesting. "As for little P. in *general*," he writes, "it is a long chapter. Her firmness I am sure of, and she has proved to a singular degree advisable and discreet, but for anything further, as sincerity, etc., etc., one must see much more to make such an exception to the rule credible."

Nothing decisive resulted from Miss Elphinstone's diplomatic visits, and things apparently shook themselves down, for soon after we find Charlotte and Miss Knight dining at Carlton House. It was just after the discovery of the body of Charles I. in the subterranean chapel at Windsor. The Prince was in a grimly jovial humour and, for the benefit of Miss Knight, acted the manner of decapitation, utilising Miss Knight's neck and shoulders for the purpose.



He was also good enough to make Charlotte a present of the central sapphire of Charles's crown, which he had received from Rome with the papers of the Stuart family. The vicissitudes of this stone were striking, for after the doomed head had worn it, and it had adorned the white brow of Princess Charlotte, the Regent took it from Prince Leopold after the Princess's death and, with questionable taste, bestowed it on the Marchioness of Conyngham, on whose beautiful and naughty head the gem sparkled at a ball at Devonshire House in 1821. It may be added that the historic jewel ultimately found its way to the regalia now in the Tower.

This dinner party, in spite of the Prince's gruesome jocularities, was a dull affair, for of the four guests besides the Princess and her lady companion, two, the always-drowsy Miss Goldsworthy and the Duke of Clarence, fell asleep after the second course!

Gradually the Princess was allowed to have a little more gaiety. Mrs. Rachel Jones writes of the garden party (at which Charlotte was present) given by the Prince Regent to celebrate the battle of Vittoria, just won by the Duke of Wellington, that "at three in the afternoon of a July day the beautiful garden of Carlton House was filled with a gay company. All the ladies came in full dress, short sleeves, low (very low) bodices, diamonds, and pearls; the men in shorts, then the exclusive wear, just before trousers were introduced from Russia, with silk stockings and knee buckles. Charlotte, bright with pleasure, shone upon by a radiant summer's day, dancing the new Scotch reels merrily, attracted all eyes and was the foremost figure in the royal group, in spite of the presence of the Prince Regent, who appeared with his handsome face and faultless wig surmounted by a hat loaded with feathers."

"This was the first day," Gronow says, "that her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte appeared in

public. She was a young lady of more than ordinary personal attractions; her features were regular, and her complexion fair with the rich bloom of youthful beauty; her eyes were blue and very expressive, and her hair was abundant and of that peculiar light brown which merges into the golden: in fact, such hair as the middle-age Italian painters associate with their conceptions of the Madonna. In figure her Royal Highness was somewhat over the ordinary height of woman, but finely proportioned and well developed. Her manners were remarkable for a simplicity and good nature which would have won admiration and invited affection in the most humble walks of life. She created universal admiration and I may say a feeling of national pride amongst all who attended the ball.

“The Prince Regent entered the gardens, giving his arm to the Queen, the rest of the Royal Family following. . . . The Princess Charlotte honoured with her presence two dances. In the first she accepted the hand of the late Duke of Devonshire, and in the second that of the Earl of Aboyne, who as Lord Huntly lived long enough to dance with Queen Victoria. The Princess entered so much into the spirit of the fête as to ask for the then fashionable Scotch dances.” It is said that the Duke danced nearly the whole time, alternately with the Princess Charlotte and the Princess Mary, thus confirming the rumour that the Duke was desirous to pay his suit to the Princess. The cartoon called “The Devonshire Minuet,” reproduced on p. 293, was published on May 29, some six weeks before the fête, and the title and the treatment show what was in the public mind. The artist has not forgotten to suggest an unmistakable look of admiration in the eyes of the young nobleman.

The Duke of Devonshire was then about three-and-twenty, and there is no doubt he entertained a warm

admiration for, and perhaps attachment to, the Princess. Indeed, there are letters in existence, Miss Jones tells us, which prove that Charlotte was not at one time altogether insensible to the attractions of a man who had everything to recommend him excepting royal blood. He had recently succeeded his father in the dukedom, and was the son of the celebrated beauty, Georgina Duchess of Devonshire. It was of this Duke—distinguished, like all the Cavendishes, for his impassive demeanour—that George IV., years later, when investing him with the Garter, said, “The Duke of Devonshire advanced up to his sovereign, with his phlegmatic, cold, awkward air, like a clown.”

Lady Charlotte Campbell has a reference to this incipient love-affair. She records that at a visit she paid to Warwick House “the Princess Charlotte was very gracious. . . . She talked in a very desultory way, and it would be difficult to say of what. She observed her mother was in very low spirits. I asked her how she supposed she could be otherwise. This questioning answer saves a great deal of trouble, and serves two purposes—*i.e.* avoids committing oneself, or giving offence by silence. There was hung in the apartment one portrait, amongst others, that very much resembled the Duke of D[evonshire]. I asked Miss Knight whom it represented; she said that was not known; it had been supposed a likeness of the Pretender when young. This answer suited my thoughts so comically, I could have laughed, if one ever did at courts anything but the contrary of what one was inclined to do.”

The fair Diarist never omits to give her impression of the Princess, and we read in the same entry that she “has a very great variety of expression in her countenance—a play of features, and a force of muscle, rarely seen in connection with such soft and shadeless colouring. Her hands and arms are beautiful, but I think her figure is already gone, and will soon be precisely

like her mother's; in short, it is the very picture of her, and not in miniature. . . . In the course of the conversation, the Princess Charlotte contrived to edge in a good deal of tum-de-dy, and would, if I had entered into the thing, have gone on with it, while looking at a little picture of herself, which had about thirty or forty different dresses put over it, done on isinglass, and which allowed the general colouring of the picture to be seen through its transparency. It was, I thought, a pretty enough conceit, though rather like dressing up a doll. 'Ah!' said Miss Knight, 'I am not content though, madam, for I yet should have liked one more dress—that of the favourite Sultana.' 'No, no!' said the Princess. 'I never was a favourite, and never can be one'—looking at a picture which she said was her father's, but which I do not believe was done for the Regent any more than for me, but represented a young man in a hussar's dress—probably a former favourite." Lady Charlotte suggests that the portrait was probably Captain Fitzclarence, with whom the Princess was supposed to have had a girlish flirtation.

The fête at Vauxhall following the festivities at Carlton House in celebration of the battle of Vittoria gave rise to much heartburning. The promoters sadly wanted the Regent's presence, but the difficulty was how to keep out the Princess of Wales. Brougham writes to Creevey: "I have nothing to tell you except that Mother P. certainly goes to the *Tea Garden* tomorrow night to meet her husband. It was her own idea, but I highly approve of it on *his* account; and as the Duchess of York goes, it is fitting Mrs. P. should go too, if it were only for five minutes. The consternation of Prinnie is wonderful. I'll bet a little money he don't go himself, so that the whole thing will have gone off as well as possible. Young P. and her father have had frequent rows of late, but one pretty serious one. He was angry with her for flirting





with the D. of Devonshire and suspected she was talking politics. . . . Quarrel they must. *He* has not equality of temper or any other kind of sense to keep well with her, and she has a spice of her mother's spirit : so interfere they must at every turn. . . . I suspect they will befool the above duke. . . . Everything went off remarkably well last night. We waited at the D[uke] of Brunswick's till we heard that the Duchess of Y[ork] was at Vauxhall ; we then proceeded there, and were much huzzaed and applauded by the crowd at the door, and also by the people in the gardens, which was much more than I had expected, having considered it as the enemy's quarters. There were a few hisses at last, but very few indeed. The Duke of Gloucester escorted the Princess round the walks, and the Duke of Kent handed her out and took care of her to the Duke of Brunswick's house, where we supped. In short, nothing could be more right and proper, dull and fatiguing, than our last night's adventures."

Lord Glenbervie gives a more detailed description of the affair, and from his "Journal" we learn its true inwardness. "I have spent the greatest part of my time in bed," he writes, "having been up all night till yesterday morning at six o'clock at the fête at Vauxhall in honour of the Victory at Vittoria, planned by the Regent, but in truth given by one hundred and twenty Stewards, nominated or approved by him, who paid fifty guineas each for fifty admission tickets, to be distributed gratis by them, and about one thousand two hundred other persons, who paid two-and a half guineas each for a dinner ticket. The entertainment therefore cost altogether eight thousand guineas, and consisted only of turtle soup, cold meat, bad fruit, indifferent wine, and wretched attendance. The illuminations were handsome, the fireworks, though directed by Colonel Congreve, very middling, the refreshments ill-managed, the sort of supper or suppers

worse and more scrambling than on a common night at Vauxhall, and no arrangement, or if any, miserably executed, for arriving and getting away, so though the ladies (none of whom were to come to the dinner) were to arrive at ten, those who set out at nine could not get there till two or three in the morning, and hardly anybody could get away before five or six. The Duke of York presided at a table in the great saloon, where the princes, foreign ministers, etc., dined. At other tables in that room, and under a very large tent, the rest of the company sat pell-mell, nobles and tradesmen, high and low, on awkward benches, as ill-accommodated as Lord Wellington and his staff can ever have been in the bustle of a campaign.

“The first intention was that the Prince of Wales was to have appeared there in the evening with the Ladies of the Royal Family, but the Princess of Wales having announced her intention of going, it was found out (and so announced in a sort of official paragraph in all the newspapers) that it was inconsistent with etiquette that the Regent should be a guest on such an occasion. The real reason was universally believed to be that he had not courage to encounter the Princess. Her avowed motive for going was to show that she was not afraid to encounter him, on which occasion Lady Glenbervie applied the following passage in Shakespeare: ‘He’s no swaggerer! He will not swagger with a Barbary hen if her feathers turn back with any show of resistance.’

“The Princess sent to Sir Charles Flint for tickets—he being the distributor of the dinner tickets. But he had been instructed to say the application must be to the Committee of Stewards. On application to the Committee the answer was there were none left. She then sent to Lord Gwydir, one of the Stewards, who sent her the number she wanted. H.R.H. and the Duchess of York were the only Royal



ladies who went; though I understand the first intention was to have a magnificent Pavilion for the Prince, the Queen, and all the Royal Family. It was the general opinion that it was impudent in the Princess to go, and pusillanimous in the Prince to stay away."

## CHAPTER XXI

1813—1814

The Prince Regent keeps his birthday in a peculiar fashion—Charlotte's life at Warwick House—Treated as a child—Bishop Fisher and his peculiarities—Charlotte on bad terms with the Queen—The Regent determines upon her marriage—The Prince of Orange is suggested—Charlotte is introduced to the Prince and the betrothal is decided upon—Charlotte refuses to assent to the condition that upon her marriage she should live abroad.

THE Prince Regent's birthday in this year (1813) was observed by him in characteristic fashion. It was kept at the then new Military College at Sandhurst, where the King was to present new colours to the cadet battalion. His Royal Highness was in a raging temper. He did not say a word to the Princess, to the Duchess of Leeds, or to Miss Knight, but looked as if he wished to annihilate the whole three. The day had been remarkably hot, and in the evening there was a beautiful moonlight. When the Queen was about to depart, the Prince Regent was not to be found. It turned out afterwards that he, with the Duke of York, the Prince of Orange (the father of the Prince to whom Charlotte was subsequently affianced), and many others were under the table, tipsy. The Duke of York had hurt his head very seriously against the wine cellarette, and in short, as Miss Knight remarks, "it was a sad business." Judging by a reference of Charlotte's lady companion's, the Prince Regent's behaviour four days later at a dinner party at Frogmore was even worse. His ill-humour was increased, and he refused to come to see the Princess

at the Lower Lodge, giving as an excuse that he could not bear to see "those d—— ladies," meaning the Duchess and Miss Knight.

Throughout the year 1813 Charlotte's life at Warwick House, Miss Knight tells us, "was exactly that of a child and her nurse. Dr. Short, the subpreceptor, "a good sort of Devonshire man, with some classical knowledge, very little taste, an honest heart, but very cautious temper," used to go every morning and read English to the Princess for an hour; then followed Mr. Sterkey, minister of the Swiss Church, who read French; and after him Küper, the German preceptor, whom Charlotte hated, thinking him a spy, and not entirely without reason. She had music lessons from various people, and fussy Bishop Fisher of Salisbury came three or four times a week, to do the important, as the chief preceptor. His manner was terribly pompous, his temper was hasty, and his vanity easily excited. He got on much better with the amiable, good-natured Duchess of Leeds than he did with the fiery Lady de Clifford. The Duchess indeed had no inclination to quarrel with anybody. Provided that she might ride two or three times a week on a quiet old horse for exercise, get into her shower bath, and take it calmly when she pleased, dine out, and go to all parties when invited, shaking hands with everybody, and touch her salary, she cared for nothing more—except when mischievous people to plague her, or curious gossips to find out what was going on, talked to her about Princess Charlotte's petticoats being too short, and her Royal Highness nodding instead of bowing, or talking to the maids-of-honour at chapel between the prayers and the sermon.

Erskine Neale, the biographer of the Duke of Kent, has an interesting reference to Bishop Fisher, whose characteristics of over-emphasis and pomposity had not departed even when he was in bodily decay. Mr. Neale, describing a visit to his lordship's house in

Upper Seymour Street, says : " The Bishop, who was fairly advanced in years, harassed by a perpetual and irritating cough, seemed feeble and dispirited. . . . The conversation took a wide range, and touched among other matters upon art—Constable the painter was present—glanced at and traversed a vast variety of topics. On a sudden an elderly clergyman observed that he had that morning seen the little Princess Victoria during her drive. . . . The Bishop's attention was instantly roused, . . . he asked question after question—how the little Princess looked—whether she seemed cheerful—whom she resembled—was her likeness to the late Duke so marked ? Each query received minute reply. The Bishop clenched the last answer with the fervent exclamation, ' May the little Princess resemble her father in character, but not in destiny ! '

" ' The former,' said a guest, with a judicious obsequiousness, ' your lordship is said to have had no small share in forming. . . . '

" ' At Kew Palace,' rejoined the Bishop, ' there was a timepiece, highly prized by George III. . . . One morning the pedestal of this relic was found vacant, and the timepiece itself lying on the ground, a wreck. . . . The King's displeasure was not light ; and immediate inquiries were instituted. After many hours had elapsed, by mere chance a question was put to Prince Edward. " I did it," was the instant and unhesitating reply. " But," said one, anxious to screen the intrepid boy, . . . " your Royal Highness did it by accident ? " " No, I did it intentionally." " But your Royal Highness regrets what you have done ? " " No ; not at all. . . ." The Prince was punished, *and not slightly.*' " Remembering the stern discipline to which the young Dukes were subjected, one can easily believe the last three words.

We glean from Lady Rose Weigall's " Memoir " some instructive particulars, showing the relations

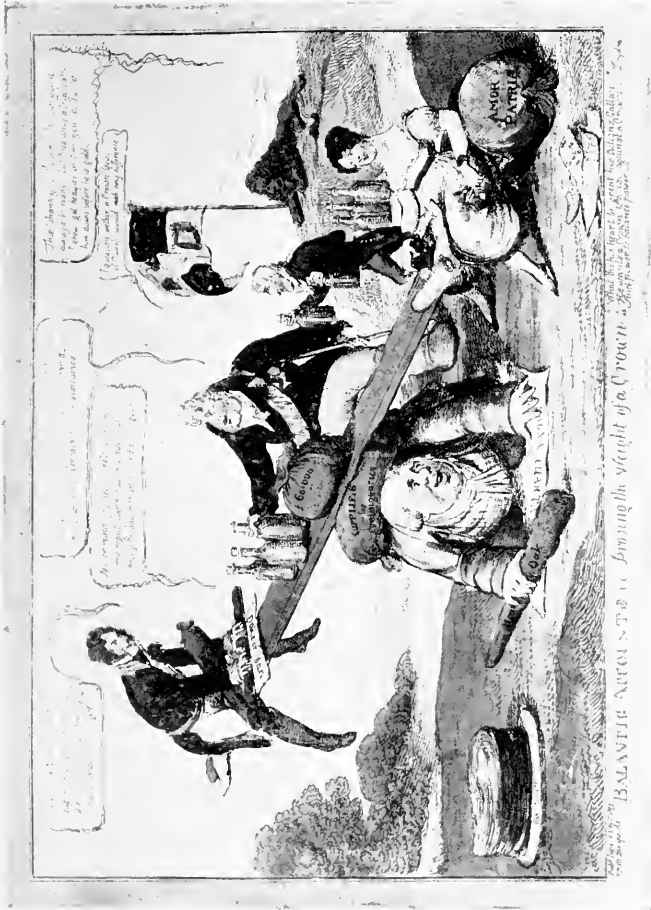
which existed at this time between Charlotte and her grandmother. Lady Rose tells us that the Princess had never been suffered to take any part in Court life, except during her visits to the Queen, who "though meaning well towards her, repelled her and treated her with coldness. Both grandmother and father habitually behaved to her as to a naughty girl in disgrace." An example of this attitude may be cited when the Princess made a new acquaintance—a girl-friend belonging to a family in favour with the Regent and altogether unexceptionable. The girl-friend was going a journey, and Charlotte was very anxious to say good-bye to her, but the little arrangements of the Princess were thwarted apparently for no other object than to make her feel her subjection. The Princess at the time was staying at Windsor, and finding the Queen was going to London, asked leave to accompany her to say good-bye to her friend. The Queen replied stiffly that "it was contrary to princely dignity to seek after any one," but that she would honour the lady with an invitation to Windsor. The disappointed Charlotte, who had hoped for a meeting away from the sombre restraints which her grandmother called "princely dignity," hereupon wrote a letter of apology to her friend for having drawn her into what she evidently considered the dreadful ordeal of a visit to Court. The Queen perhaps, however, meant to do her granddaughter a kindness, as she invited the friend to dine and sleep at Frogmore; but Charlotte was not to be conciliated in this fashion, and in the spirit of a wilful child resented the concession. Her friend, says Lady Rose, "passed a most uncomfortable evening, for the Princess drew her aside, began a whispering conversation, mimicked her grandmother, and behaved in the very way to justify the Queen's severity. A little later her feelings towards her grandmother changed much; but just at this moment there is no doubt that, though the Queen's

manner of dealing with her was injudicious, Charlotte's own conduct was headstrong and wilful enough to justify much uneasiness in those who wished her well."

Very admirable sentiments; but what did Charlotte's friends expect? If she were continually treated as a child, was it remarkable that she should sometimes act as a child? The wonder is not that she showed petulance, but that, remembering her impulsive temperament, she did not break out into open rebellion, for at this particular time she was anxiously looking forward to the hour of her emancipation from schoolgirl thralldom.

Soon after this episode the Princess went with her grandmother to Weymouth. She was not well, and, destitute of social enjoyments and condemned to tread the dull, unvaried routine of Queen Charlotte and her elderly daughters, she tried to find relief in composing and setting favourite verses to music, as well as in playing and singing. Miss Rachel Jones gives a specimen of her compositions. It cannot be called in any way remarkable. But the occupation amused her, and this no doubt was her object.

The Princess refers to her musical studies in a letter to Lady Ashworth, whose acquaintance she made during the summer at Windsor, and with whom she kept up a correspondence. "You will be glad," she writes, "I think, to hear that I am much pleased with Dizzi [the harp master], and that considering this is only the fourth lesson I am getting on, and like it, though I have all sorts of difficulties which must be conquered. I have also begun to sing with Le Derma, who gives me every encouragement. He assures me that I have a voice, and that it is even now stronger for the few lessons I have had. My return to London has again inspired me, and I have composed two more little things. One is an andantino "Chez Moi," the other a waltz, which Dizzi has arranged for the harp, and



PRINCE LEOPOLD—THE REGENT—PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

From a cartoon by Gilbeay





therefore I must take the liberty of sending it to you, as I composed it for the harp. You will see probably the passages are difficult for the piano. My day is well employed, so that I am never idle. Drawing I have been devoting my attention to. When we meet I hope you will think I have much improved."

She was always fond of outdoor life, especially riding. The Duchess of Leeds used to tell an anecdote of her fancy for fishing. When engaged in this sport, on catching a fish the Princess would tie a piece of ribbon round its tail and throw it back into the water, noticing with delight that those which had not been caught attacked those thus decorated. Once having been very successful in catching a great many and having exhausted all her ribbon, she unpicked her bonnet and made use of its trimmings as bait.

During October of this year (1813) the Princess of Wales wrote to Miss Hayman as follows: "My daughter is still at Windsor, but is in hopes of coming to town in November. I have not seen her since two months, though she writes very frequently and seems to have the same affection for me as formerly. She lives in great hopes that some change in her favour will take place in January, but I much doubt it. Father and daughter are not on a very comfortable footing, and the last time she saw him there was not a word spoken."

Considering the importance of this next birthday, it is extraordinary that neither the Queen nor the Regent should have opened their lips on the subject to Charlotte. Lady Rose points out that the course adopted was one opposed to every natural impulse, and admitted of but one interpretation—that there was a deliberate design to keep the young Princess in the background.

One of Charlotte's letters (dated Windsor, November 2, 1813) confirms this conclusion. "I am pretty satisfied," she writes, "that I shall not be well or in spirits till I remove from hence, which

will be on the 10th of this month, to London. . . . It will be perhaps dull at first, as no one I know will be there ; but I like town so very much and intend to employ every hour of the day, so that I look to the change and the settling with great impatience. I shall have to pay a visit of a week here at Christmas ; I fancy so is the present intention, as I am to be confirmed, and take the Sacrament with my 'good family.' There are, as there always will be, various reports about, some true, I presume, others false, so that I hardly know what to believe and what not. One of them is that I am to have an establishment on the 7th of January [her birthday] which is to consist of four ladies. That I am to have *one* is, I believe, true ; but further I cannot say. You will easily believe it will be a subject of no small interest to me who these ladies will be, and if the nomination will be left to me."

The Princess was indulging in false hopes, for intrigues were going on even in such a small matter as this. On the 29th she wrote again, and a very characteristic letter it was. We transcribe it from Lady Rose Weigall's "Memoir" :

"You will see by the date I am in town again. You will be glad, I flatter myself, to hear that I have been settled here three weeks for good, except a week, the 1st of January, when I am to go to Windsor to be confirmed, etc., etc. In every sense of the word it *is for good*, as I am quite well again, and indeed feel quite comfortable, as I have been left quiet. Nobody has been in town of my friends, but I have filled up my day with masters. I draw a great deal, also, and have composed some more things for the piano. . . . I am both delighted and satisfied with my two masters, and they both give me great encouragement to proceed. I am delighted to say C——s [some girls she had known from childhood] are to be in town to-day, so that I hope to enjoy them nearly three weeks quietly, though they are, I

am very sorry to say, far from being favourites at Windsor; and though no prohibition was given to my seeing them, yet there was an expression of not too much intimacy, and the Queen said 'she never could *taste* those young ladies.' I will do her justice in saying nothing has passed of that sort since I came to town. There were several abominable lies set about before I came away, and had been believed; it was very uncomfortable for the time; nothing since, however. As to an establishment, I know nothing more of it than when I wrote last. You need not be afraid of tiring me with your long letters, which are always too short a great deal, and are *made more so by the space you leave at the top*, which can then only allow of very few lines to one who so eagerly devours them; perhaps you are thinking of *etiquette*, that odious word which is well for great people and great occasions, but which ought not, and need never surely obtrude itself beyond what is absolutely necessary between two *friends*. Am I not taking a great liberty with you in saying this? Do I stand very guilty in your sight, or am I forgiven?"

In the month of December the Princess was to "come out" in a limited way. Many descriptions have been given of Charlotte, and here is one from the pen of Lady Rose which cannot be called too enthusiastic: "She was rather above the middle height, and her figure was large and fully developed. The likeness to her father noticed in her babyhood remained; she had the same well-cut regular features; her head was finely shaped, and her hands and feet were extremely pretty. It was a defect in her face that there was a total absence of shade. Her eyebrows and eyelashes were white, her eyes and hair light, her complexion pale and disfigured by marks of smallpox. In the higher forms of expression her ardent mind counteracted the want of colouring, and her countenance beamed with her quieter emotions. The slight hesitation in her speech had not

entirely disappeared, but her voice was flexible, and though sometimes loud, was never unmusical."

The "coming out," which was inevitable, was evidently dreaded both by the Regent and the Queen. Charlotte was nearly eighteen, when she considered (erroneously, as Brougham points out) she would be of age, and it was certain she would not permit herself to be kept in subjection much longer. But for the moment neither her father nor grandmother was disposed to relinquish their authority, and matters became so strained that it looked as if Charlotte could do nothing right. The Prince was displeased because at a ball at Carlton House the Duke of Gloucester sat down by the Princess and talked to her. Charlotte came home indignant at having been watched and warded, and the ball was by no means so pleasant as it ought to have been. The attentions of the Duke of Devonshire gave great offence, and the Duchess of Leeds after dining at the castle came home crying. She had undergone a severe wiggling from the Queen and the Prince Regent on the subject of the Duke, and Miss Knight had a share of the blame. It was all very silly and childish, but none the less the gossip, the invention of "facts," and the tittle-tattle gave real pain to the young Princess.

There was a motive in all this carping and espionage. The Prince Regent had a husband ready for Charlotte in the person of the Prince of Orange, and it was of the highest importance that the girl should not place her affections elsewhere. But for the moment all was secret.

The Prince Regent was very anxious to see Charlotte married, and possibly he feared opposition from her if the wooer were not to her liking. The young Prince of Orange was the man selected for her by his Royal Highness, and no doubt he and the father of the Prince had arranged matters, but up to the present not a word was breathed to Princess Charlotte. She, how-

ever, had her suspicions, and when an invitation to dine at Lady Liverpool's was received, she excused herself from going on account of not being well. Nothing had been said about the Prince of Orange being at the dinner, but she suspected it, and it turned out that she was right. Her excuse of illness she substantiated by putting on a blister. The excuse, however, may have been justified, for she suffered at times from a bodily weakness.

The useful Sir Henry Halford now appeared on the scene, and the subject of marriage was broached to the Princess. In the evening after the interview with Sir Henry, she told Miss Knight that they all wanted her to marry, and that she saw "they wished for the hereditary Prince of Orange, but that she would never marry him, and that she had told Sir Henry that the Duke of Gloucester was the most eligible person and the one she would prefer."

Charlotte certainly never pretended to have any affection for the Prince of Orange, and did not hesitate to ridicule him even after their betrothal. She told her mother that his being approved of by the Royal Family was quite sufficient to make him disapproved of by her; for that she would marry a man who would be at her devotion, not theirs. "Marry I will," said she to the Princess of Wales, "and that directly in order to enjoy my liberty, but not the Prince of Orange. I think him so ugly that I am almost obliged to turn my head away in disgust when he is speaking to me." "But, my dear," replied her mother, "whoever you will marry will become a king, and you will give him a power over you." "A king!" contemptuously replied the young Princess. "Pho!—Pho! Never! He will only be my subject, never my king."

This determination was made some time afterwards; at present the Prince of Orange was in the background, and when Charlotte expressed her fancy for the Duke of Gloucester, she was unaware of what was in the

Regent's mind. Meanwhile Sir Henry Halford had conveyed her sentiments to the Regent, and the result was a visit of the latter to the Lower Lodge, Windsor, where Charlotte was staying with Miss Knight. The young Princess was not so full of fight as she afterwards became, and she asked Miss Knight to see the Prince first.

The interview took place when the Regent was "certainly as bitter as possible on the Duke of Gloucester, and not a little so concerning Princess Charlotte." He positively refused to give his consent to their union, and subsequently told Miss Knight that he believed the Princess's attachment to the Duke of Gloucester was but a blind, and that in reality the man she preferred was the Duke of Devonshire.

Gradually pressure from various quarters was brought to bear upon the girl, and no sooner was there a prospect of her accepting the Dutch Prince than the Regent's manner changed, and at the end of the year there was quite a merry family gathering at Carlton House, the Queen and two of her daughters being present.

An engraved portrait of the young suitor was placed on a chair to be looked at, and Princess Charlotte thought it "not ugly." The Regent was, for him, in a mighty good humour. Evidently his object was to smooth matters as much as possible, and to win over Charlotte to his views he made her a present of a belt sent him from Turkey, to which he had added a diamond clasp. Miss Knight heard him joke about a ring, and to follow this up little Lord Arran lifted his hand and whispered to the Princess mysteriously, "It will do—it will do." The meaning of all this was that the Prince was coming over to England.

Accordingly, the Prince arrived in London on Friday, December 10. Charlotte, who was present at a dinner party at Carlton House on the following Sunday, given on purpose to introduce the young

couple to each other, "liked him better than she expected." She was dressed in a sad-coloured costume of violet and black, and looked very well. The Regent was delighted at the progress of affairs, and, with the two young people, paced up and down one of the rooms apart from the rest of the company, "the father and daughter, comely and stately, contrasting with the less noble appearance of the Hereditary Prince, who was ugly, sallow, slender, and spindle-legged," and the engagement was made then and there in an informal way, the Princess influenced by a momentary impulse to please her father.

"Will it not do?" said the Regent.

"Oh," returned the Princess, "I do not say that. I like his manner very well, as much as I have seen of it." Upon which the Regent was overcome with joy, and joined their hands.

The Regent was bent upon hurrying the courtship. He came to see Charlotte the next day, bringing with him the Prince of Orange, whom Miss Knight further describes as "particularly plain and sickly in his look, his figure very slender, and manner rather hearty and boyish." A more unsuitable mate for the robust, impulsive, and warm-blooded Charlotte could hardly be imagined, and if there was any love-making on this occasion it must have been of the most vapid and uninteresting kind. At all events, the young man had the opportunity, for the Regent turned aside, leaving the two together, and sat by the fire chatting to Miss Knight in an adjoining room. The object of the chat was to make it known to the lady companion that the Princess Charlotte was engaged to the young Prince, but that Miss Knight was to tell no one until he gave her leave. The Regent evidently had his doubts as to Charlotte's real sentiments, for he desired Miss Knight to give her good advice, particularly "against flirtation."

These doubts were soon confirmed, for while he

was talking the conversation was interrupted in rather an embarrassing fashion. The Princess was suddenly heard sobbing hysterically. The Regent started to his feet, and Miss Knight followed him to the door of the other room, where they found the Prince of Orange looking very frightened and Princess Charlotte in great distress.

“What, is he going away?” exclaimed the Regent.

The question could only have been put in a bantering spirit. He saw something was amiss, but he did not trouble to inquire further, and soon after took the Prince away, as they had an engagement to dine in the City.

When they were gone Charlotte explained what had caused her outburst of emotion. The Prince had told her it was expected she should reside every year two or three months in Holland, and even when necessary follow him into the army; that the Regent and his Ministers had not thought it advisable to tell her this, but that, as he always wished they should be open and fair to each other, he was resolved to tell her.

The announcement descended upon her like a thunderbolt. Apart from the humiliating thought that the father and the Ministers were plotting to keep her in the dark, there was also the suspicion that they wanted to banish her from England.

It can hardly be doubted that Charlotte had secret ambitions to fulfil the high station which fate had apparently designed for her. If at any moment the Regent died, she would be Queen of England. She could then marry any one she pleased. The idea of the future ruler of the British Isles dwelling in a comparatively minor and uninteresting country, with a husband inane and uncongenial, and at whose heels she might have to dangle amid the comfortless surroundings of a military camp, must have filled her with horror, especially as the truth had been sprung



upon her without warning. No wonder she broke down.

Repulsive as was the proposition, Charlotte, however, endeavoured to reconcile herself to it; but it is certain that from this time whatever favourable impression the Prince of Orange had made upon her disappeared. Nor was the betrothal popular. What people thought of it is plainly shown in Gillray's cantoon (see page 303).

## CHAPTER XXII

1814

Charlotte suspects that the Regent wants to banish her from England—Arrival in England of the Grand Duchess of Oldenburg—Rumours respecting her “mission”—Charlotte’s firmness—Failure of the Regent’s attempt to coerce her—The Queen refuses to receive the Princess of Wales at her Drawing-room—Charlotte sides with her mother—The scene at the opera—Charlotte first sees Prince Leopold—Her flirtations.

THE first visit of the Prince of Orange to England was a hurried one, and, the introduction to the Princess over, he returned to Holland. The Princess Charlotte did not trouble over his absence—indeed, it was in some aspects a relief; she had worries of another kind. It was a repetition of the old tittle-tattle from which she had suffered so much. The most exaggerated accounts of whatever she did or said reached the ears of the Regent, who showed his feebleness of mind in the importance he attached to the veriest trifles. At this time he was very unwell. A prolonged visit to Belvoir Castle on the occasion of the christening of the heir to the dukedom of Rutland, and a more than usual devotion to the pleasures of the table, had brought on an attack of gout, which did not show itself at once, save in respect to his temper.

What he called an “unpleasant” circumstance irritated him, and he sent for Miss Knight to give him an explanation. It was all about a new carriage which had been ordered for the Princess without his know-

ledge. He also considered the Princess was spending too much money in giving presents, and when Miss Knight chanced to mention his sister, the Princess Amelia, he burst into a flood of tears. Altogether he was in a disagreeable mood, partly snappish and partly maudlin, and the interview ended by his announcing that Charlotte must be contented without amusements that spring, as he could not give entertainments under present circumstances; that she must not think of frivolity—she was to be married, and must think of the duties of a wife.

No doubt the object of the interview is to be found in the last word. The Regent was terribly afraid, the lover being out of the way, lest Charlotte might alter her mind. Had this come about, it would have led to much embarrassment, for at that moment letters were in preparation to be sent from the Prince of Orange, asking formally for the hand of the Princess in marriage. The sentiments of the Regent were conveyed to the Princess by Miss Knight, and the effect was to revive in Charlotte a repugnance to the proposed marriage and a dislike of the Prince of Orange.

This result was only to be expected, for, as Baron Stockmar points out, "Instead of treating the poor Princess in a matter so important to her with openness, confidence, and fatherly care, and, inexperienced as she was, making the circumstances on every side clear to her, it was their policy to keep her in the dark, so that, without knowing what she was doing, matters might be pushed on to a point from which retreat would be more and more difficult."

Charlotte's own feelings may be gathered from the following letter, written in February to a girl-friend: ". . . . I believe the subject of my quitting this country will be made a cause of much debate as soon as Parliament meets. *My own family, and the head of it, too,* is very desirous I should leave it, which I

cannot say I am, as I feel naturally excessively attached to the country I was born and educated in. You must be sensible, too, that I have been as yet so very little out, and so little known, that I am nearly a stranger, and leaving it with that impression would, I think, never do. What I am anxious for is that, at all events, no *absolute prohibition* shall pass, so as wholly to prevent the possibility of my going even if I wished it; for if such a law was passed, you will be aware how very painful it might hereafter be to me, when I may (with truth to you) say that he (*i.e.* the Prince of Orange) may be liked much better than he is now, for this reason, that he is nearly a stranger to me, and, as you may suppose, naturally dying of shyness and fear predominant in all his few visits to me, though, to do him justice, he was all kindness and amiability, and endeavoured all he could to make me more at my ease, and to soften down the visit abroad. . . . When he was going he told me, 'I shall return as soon as possible—March the soonest; I should think the end of April.' It now may be sooner, as, from a letter I got yesterday, he seems to be heartily *ennuyé* in Holland, and very anxious to return to England; and if so, the moment he comes and he has been here a week, it will take place, I fancy, as I never saw any one in such a hurry for it to be done as the head of my family [the Regent]. . . . I was allowed to go to Connaught Place on the 7th of last month, but not to dine there. My birthday was kept quietly at home, and, except for a few cadeaux, totally neglected."

When the Princess sent this letter she was under a bond of silence as regarding her betrothal so far as her mother was concerned, but ten days after she wrote to her friend: "The interdict has at last been taken off my tongue. Lord Liverpool was with me the other day, to say I might now write and inform the Princess [her mother] of it, as it was no longer to

be kept secret, and it would be strange if she were not the first informed of it. . . . As you may believe and suppose, from the moment it was talked of here so universally I could not, in delicacy of feeling, keep it from my mother and therefore what I wrote afterwards, in consequence of this permission, was for form's sake. It went off better than I expected, for I had both a kind and good-humoured letter on it, which I communicated to higher powers [her father], and in a few days I propose going to see her, which will be proper, as I have not done so since my marriage being announced to her."

The position in which the young Princess was placed at this juncture was very embarrassing, and demanded from her the utmost tact. An unnatural command had been laid upon her by the Regent to conceal her engagement from her mother, and permission, when it came, was given grudgingly. Charlotte was perfectly well aware that she was made use of, whenever opportunity served, to cause annoyance to the Princess of Wales, but to resent this would have led to an open rupture between her and the Regent, which would have made matters worse. So, although she paid her promised visit to Connaught Place, where her mother was now living, she did not repeat it for politic reasons.

While she was trying to steer a middle and a difficult course, she was beginning to convince herself that her first suspicions as to the Regent's motives in marrying her to the Prince of Orange were correct—namely, that he wanted to banish her. She puts her sentiments plainly enough in a letter written on March 12, wherein she says: "As to going abroad, I believe and hope it to be quite out of the question, as I find by high and low that it is a very unpopular measure in England, and as such of course (as my inclinations do not lead me either) I could not go against it, and besides which, I have now no manner

of doubt that it is decidedly an object and wish of more than one to get rid of me if possible in that way. The event is not now to take place certainly till May, but about when I cannot really say."

Five days after this letter was written an unexpectedly arrived in England in the person of the Grand Duchess Catherine of Oldenburg, sister of the Emperor of Russia, a lady who some months before had been much talked of as a possible wife for the Prince Regent in case he should get a divorce. A reception was given to the Duchess at Carlton House, when the Princess Charlotte was present, and in the evening there was a large party and a concert "which annoyed the Grand Duchess so much that she left the room abruptly." It was given out that music affected her nerves. The Duchess is described as having a slight and well-formed figure, a good complexion, fine eyes, and dignified manners. She had two lady attendants, whom Lord Colchester called "ugly old women." Princess Charlotte was much pleased with the Duchess, returned her visit to Warwick House, and became more and more enchanted. Miss Knight was told by the young Princess that the Grand Duchess had complained of the assiduities of the Duke of Clarence, of his vulgar familiarity, and of his want of delicacy, and that she had called the Prince Regent "un voluptueux." In addition the Duchess talked "very confidentially" to the Princess—all of which "shocked" Miss Knight.

The Regent feared the new influence, and the invaluable Sir Henry Halford was sent by him to Miss Knight with instructions that she must keep Princess Charlotte from going too often to the Grand Duchess; and Miss Knight did her best to obey, but she could not prevent the Duchess from coming to Warwick House, nor could she "well blame Princess Charlotte for being pleased with the conversation of a sensible woman of a rank similar to her own." Lady Charlotte Campbell writes: "The Duchess of Oldenburg

is spoken of as a very clever woman; and I am inclined to believe the truth of the report, by the observations she seems to take, not only of our places of entertainment, but of everything best worth seeing in this country. I understand she is a great favourite of Princess Charlotte, and gives her (as it is supposed) excellent advice about her conduct."

There were a good many speculations concerning the Grand Duchess and her object in coming to England. Some thought there was a political purpose in the visit, others that she was on matrimonial thoughts intent. Besides the rumour that she had her eye on the Regent, it was also whispered that the Duke of Clarence (who, as will be remembered, was always in search of a wife) was the favoured individual. It does not appear, however, that the lady had any other idea than to enjoy herself, and see the sights of London. Lady Vernon, writing to Miss Mary Frampton, says: "In answer to your question about the Russian Princess, I hear a most amiable character of her in every respect. She married this Duke of Holstein to avoid being pressed to marry Buonaparte; behaved most admirably the whole of his life, nursed him in a putrid fever, and was sincerely attached to him. Her nerves have been so much shook by this and by the loss of him, that she is travelling to tranquillise her mind and nerves. She does not mean to stay long in London; intends to see everything worth seeing, both in the Metropolis and all over the kingdom—the Universities in particular—Bath, and all the great Houses. She is very well read and sensible, her conversation interesting, and her manners peculiarly pleasing. Not handsome, but interesting looking. No sort of intention of marrying, is still in slight mourning for her husband, has two children, the eldest with her."

A month later Lady Vernon writes: "There never was so active a personage as this Duchess of Oldenburg.

She not only goes to see everything worth seeing, but goes into the very minutiae. At the bank the directors were dressed very smart to receive and communicate what she might wish to be informed of, but she presently questioned them out of their knowledge, and they were obliged to call the clerks to satisfy her on points of which they were totally ignorant. I daresay she has her forefather before her eyes, and is determined to return as well instructed as the Czar Peter. I fancy she is a clever woman, and was very well instructed quite from youth."

In the same letter Lady Vernon tells us how great ladies can show their hatred in the politest of manners. Madame de Staël was staying in London at the time, and for some reason was disliked by the women of high life, possibly because she was too clever. It may be they were afraid she would satirise them in her books. As Madame hated Napoleon, this ought to have been a bond of sympathy between her and the Grand Duchess, but the reverse was the case. Lady Vernon writes: "Entirely without her [the Grand Duchess's] knowledge, Madame de Staël was carried into her apartment, she alone, or at best with only her ladies. The Duchess got up the moment she heard Madame de Staël's name, received her with the greatest coolness, but civility, stood all the time so that Madame de Staël could not sit, and very soon said she was hurried by business and dismissed her just civilly. Madame de Staël in a great rage at her reception—she deserved it by her impertinence in going.

"I heard another story as a fact, of Madame de Staël, but do not vouch for it. It was Lady Caroline Damer, I think, who told it me—that Lady Hertford had refused her being introduced to her, saying she did not wish her acquaintance. Some time after, Madame de Staël met Mrs. Bankes, and taking her for Lady Hertford, went up to her, saying how happy she was at last in seeing *la belle marquise*, of whom she had







heard so much, and went on with a great deal of flattery; Mrs. Banks being in a maze for a time, so that it was not immediately that she could understand whom she took her for; one does not hear so much of this lady since those grand operations at Paris and elsewhere."

It has been asserted that the influence of the Grand Duchess was the direct cause of the Princess Charlotte breaking her engagement with the Prince of Orange; but beyond a piece of gossip, to be related in its proper place, there is no evidence of this. Charlotte's dislike of the match had been growing for weeks previous to the arrival of the Grand Duchess; at the same time there is no doubt her dislike was accentuated by the lady's counsels.

"Poor Princess Charlotte," writes Miss Knight, "was far from happy." On April 10 she wrote to the Regent, requesting to see the marriage contract; expressed her uneasiness at not hearing of a house or establishment, and begged that insertion might be made in the contract of an article to prevent her being taken or kept out of England against her inclinations. To this the Prince returned no answer, but two days after sent for Miss Knight, and pretended anger, promising Charlotte forgiveness, however, if she withdrew her letter; otherwise he must bring the matter before the Cabinet. He further declared that he had no intention to banish her, but that the duty of a wife was to follow her husband; that perhaps he might have to build a house for her, and that in the meanwhile when she came to England she might be at Carlton House. This and much more Miss Knight had to report to the Princess, and was to return to Carlton House the next day with the answer.

Charlotte was neither to be frightened by threats nor deceived by promises. She knew the Regent far too well to hesitate what she should do, and her answer virtually was that she would not budge an inch

from her position. The Regent could not contend against the girl's firmness, and after keeping Miss Knight waiting a long time for his reply, at last dismissed her with the announcement that the Duke of York would be sent to talk to Princess Charlotte on the subject.

In his conversation with Miss Knight the Prince showed his usual duplicity, for he actually asserted that it was the Princess and not himself who had initiated the engagement! Of course the Princess indignantly denied having done any such thing. Interviews took place between the Princess and the Duke of York, and letters passed, but Charlotte was staunch to her views, and the Regent and his brother were at a loss what to do. The Prince by this time must have been convinced that he would have to walk warily, for the public were watching the progress of affairs, and Charlotte's popularity was increasing. Miss Knight says that after the procession of the King and Royal Family of France, who were in England at this time on a visit, "a breakfast was served, and on our way home the acclamations and throng of the populace would scarcely allow us to get on. Whenever Princess Charlotte appeared, this was more the case, though she by no means sought it."

During these protracted negotiations the Princess of Wales remained neutral, but she was only awaiting the opportunity of entering the fray, and this opportunity Queen Charlotte gave her. London was full of excitement over the visit of the allied sovereigns after the Peace of 1814; but all through the visit the Princess Caroline was treated with marked neglect, due to the manœuvres of the Regent. The climax came when, on the Princess claiming to be present at the two Drawing-rooms to be held in honour of the royal visitors, she was informed that as the Prince Regent intended to be present, his Royal Highness had requested her Majesty to intimate to the Princess of

Wales his determination not to meet her either in public or in private. The Queen was thus placed under the painful necessity of intimating to her Royal Highness that she could not be received at her Drawing-room. This was quite sufficient to raise the storm. Letters passed, indignant ones on the part of the Princess, and replied to with cold dignity by Queen Charlotte. Finally, the Princess yielded the point, much to Brougham's annoyance, though he afterwards made adroit use of the submission.

In the meantime Charlotte was made aware of her mother's exclusion, and she was furious. A friend, a young married lady, called on her at Warwick House, and missed her usual warm, cheerful greeting. The Princess was much disturbed, and said, "As my mother is forbidden to appear at the Drawing-room, of course no one who is *my* friend will think of going." The lady withdrew in great perplexity, for her position and the kindness she had received from Queen Charlotte made her appearance at Court imperative. The next morning Princess Charlotte sent for her, and running up to her, exclaimed, "Oh my dear Lady —, do forget what I said yesterday. I have since thought how important it is for you to be well with the Queen, and how necessary that you should pay your respects at Court. You must pay no attention to what I expressed yesterday. Think no more of it."

Only two days before the Drawing-room was held did Charlotte receive an intimation from her grandmother that she was to attend, and she had scarcely time to have a proper dress made up. She was not allowed to dress at home, lest it should be considered that she was going in state, and though she was then lame, having hurt her knee, it was proposed that she should dress in Princess Elizabeth's apartments at the top of Buckingham House. The surgeons objected, but with no avail, and the only concession was the substitution of a room on the second floor. The day

before the Drawing-room was held, the answer of the Prince of the Netherlands, consenting to her remaining in England, arrived. The Prince of Orange showed her his father's letter to this effect, but by the latter it plainly appeared that there had been instructions given in England.

It is very doubtful whether this concession, which was meant to smooth matters over, had the effect intended, and when Charlotte made her appearance for the first time at Court on Thursday, June 2, "a sad and indignant heart," to quote Miss Rachel Jones, "was beating beneath the beautiful attire of white satin, roses and diamonds, in which she stood arrayed." The second Drawing-room took place on Wednesday the 8th, and on Friday the 10th the Prince Regent, the royal visitors, and a very large party went to Ascot, afterwards dining at Frogmore. The poor young Princess was left behind, although the Prince of Orange was present at this, as at every other amusement prepared for the illustrious guests. He went everywhere, dined everywhere, danced at every ball, "to the great displeasure of Cinderella at home," who was treated with a neglect which appears unaccountable, for up to June 18 it was still supposed by the Regent that her engagement to the Prince of Orange would be carried through. Yet, with one exception only, she was invited to none of the entertainments going on.

On the day that the Court went to Ascot, she spent several hours at Warwick House studying the revised articles in her marriage treaty, and on this day she signed the agreement. The next day was Saturday, when the Imperial and Royal party were present at the opera. A tremendous crowd overflowed the house. The Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Grand Duchess Catherine, and others were in the royal box, headed by the Regent, who marched in magnificently amid shouts of applause. But mortifi-

cation was in store for him. He had contrived to exclude his wife from all the other festivities, but she had at last out-generalled him. The Princess of Wales made her appearance also, in state, and we get a vivid picture of the scene from the pen of her lady-in-waiting.

“When we arrived at the opera,” says Lady Charlotte Campbell, “to the Princess’s and all her attendants’ infinite surprise, we saw the Regent placed between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and all the minor princes, in a box to the right. ‘God save the King’ was performing when the Princess entered, and consequently she did not sit down. I saw the Regent was at that time standing and applauding the Grassini. As soon as the air was over, the whole pit turned round to the Princess’s box and applauded her. We entreated her to rise and make a curtsey, but she sat immovable, and at last, turning round, she said to Lady — : ‘My dear, Punch’s wife is nobody when Punch is present.’ ‘We shall be hissed,’ said Sir W. Gell. ‘No, no,’ again replied the Princess with infinite good-humour, ‘I know my business better than to take the morsel out of my husband’s mouth ; I am not to seem to know that the applause is meant for me till they call my name.’ The Prince seemed to verify her words, for he got up and bowed to the audience. This was construed into a bow to the Princess, most unfortunately : I say most unfortunately, because she has been blamed for not returning it ; but I, who was an eye-witness of the circumstance, know the Princess acted just as she ought to have done. The fact was, the Prince took the applause to himself ; and his friends, or rather his toadies (for they do not deserve the name of friends), to save him from the imputation of this ridiculous vanity, chose to say that he did the most beautiful and elegant thing in the world, and bowed to his wife !

“When the opera was finished, the Prince and his

supporters were applauded, but not enthusiastically ; and scarcely had his Royal Highness left the box, when the people called for the Princess, and gave her a very warm applause. She then went forward and made three curtsies, and hastily withdrew. When the coach attempted to drive home through Charles Street, the crowd of carriages was so immense it was impossible to pass down that street, and with difficulty the Princess's carriage backed, and we returned past Carlton House, where the mob surrounded her carriage, and, having once found out that it was her Royal Highness, they applauded her and huzzaed her. The mob opened the carriage doors, and some of them insisted upon shaking hands with her, and asked if they should burn Carlton House. 'No, my good people,' she said ; 'be quite quiet—let me pass, and go home to your beds.'"

The Hon. Amelia Murray has an amusing reference to Caroline's triumph at the opera. "My brother," she says, "was among the young men who helped to give her an ovation at the opera. A few days afterwards he went to a breakfast at a place near Woolwich [Blackheath?]. There he saw the Princess in a gorgeous dress, which was looped up to show her petticoat, covered with stars, with silver wings on her shoulders, sitting under a tree with a pot of porter on her knee, and as a final to the gaiety she had the doors opened of every room in the house, and selecting a partner she galloped through them, desiring all the guests to follow her example!" This display of obstreperousness quite disillusioned the young man.

The only State function in connection with the festivities at which Charlotte was allowed to be present was one of great moment to the young Princess, though she did not, and could not, at the time appreciate its importance. On Monday, June 12, a grand banquet was given at Carlton House, and on this occasion, according to Miss Rachel Jones, the



Princess first saw Prince Leopold. "As the room gradually filled," we are told, "the great crimson drawing-room where the State receptions were held, her attention was caught by a singularly handsome young man, who was occupied in paying some attention to a young lady whom she knew. She watched him; she noticed his tall soldier-like figure and quiet dignified manner, and turning to a friend, observed how strange it was that the young lady did not seem more gratified by his attention. Prince Leopold was not introduced to the Princess Charlotte on that evening, and although he excited her admiration, her fancy remained for the present untouched; in fact, her thoughts were at the moment occupied by another—a Prussian Prince who had come with his cousin Frederick William III., a man seventeen years older than herself, but whose society she much liked, receiving his visits at Warwick House as she received those of all the princes and great personages then in London."

If the truth be told, it would seem that the impressionable young Princess was by no means averse to flirtation. Captain Hesse, Captain FitzClarence, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Devonshire, and the Prince of Prussia all found her fascinating, and if she were conscious of their admiration and did not discourage their attentions, who can wonder? The pastime of "frizellation," to use the expressive word coined by the beauteous Molly Lepel some seventy-five years before, to indicate what is known as "philandering," must have come as a welcome break in the monotonous and unnatural life the Princess was forced to lead. None of these affairs were more than girlish fancies, although, if what Greville says of the reminiscences of the Princess de Flahault (Miss Mercer Elphinstone) be correctly recorded, Charlotte, both as regards Captain Hesse and the Prince of Prussia, must have gone perilously near the borders of indiscretion.

## CHAPTER XXIII

1814

Maladroitness of the Prince of Orange—The Regent's drinking bouts—Alleged ruse of the Grand Duchess of Oldenburg to disgust Charlotte with the Prince of Orange—The Princess breaks off the engagement—Rumours concerning Prince Leopold—The Regent's surprise visit to Warwick House—Sudden dismissal of Charlotte's ladies and new ones installed—Charlotte's precipitate flight—She takes refuge at her mother's—Brougham's account of the affair—She is persuaded to return—A queer story recorded by Greville.

THE conduct of the Prince Regent throughout the marriage negotiations was contemptible, and as a matter of policy his moroseness of temper and petty spite were gross blunders. The Prince of Orange did nothing to smooth over the difficulties—indeed, he accentuated the position by taking his tone from that of the father instead of conciliating the daughter. Perhaps the explanation is found in the possibility that the young man was not particularly anxious for the alliance. He might have feared that Charlotte would prove a somewhat masterful wife. Certainly she never allowed him to be under any delusions about her wishes, and it is not extraordinary that the subject of the Princess of Wales should be one on which they did not think alike.

It was only natural that Charlotte should champion her mother, and she told the Prince of Orange that on her account it would be inexpedient that she should leave England for some time after her marriage; that when she had a house of her own it must be open

equally to both her parents; and that as the child of both, she must ignore all differences between them.

The Prince of Orange feared the Regent and cared nothing for the Princess of Wales, who had always been hostile to the marriage, and the reasons urged by the Princess Charlotte for stopping in England were arguments to him for getting away from disagreeable complications. He combated her resolution, Lady Rose Weigall records, and said that he had been willing to stand by her in getting the article which secured her freedom inserted in the marriage treaty, but did not suppose that she would refuse altogether to go abroad with him, and that if this was her intention, their respective duties were irreconcilable and their marriage impossible. A discussion ensued, and common everyday squabbles occurred to exasperate the dispute.

Everything, indeed, seemed to be going badly for the Regent's plans, and the recklessness of the Regent himself made matters worse. Creevey, writing in June 1815, says of him: "Prinny is exactly in the state one would wish; he lives only by protection of his visitors. If he is caught alone, nothing can equal the execrations of the people who recognise him. She, the Princess, on the contrary, carries everything before her, and had it not been for an accident in her coming into the opera on Saturday night, whilst the applause of the Emperor and King was going on, by which means she got no *distinct and separate* applause, though certainly a great deal of what was going on was directed to her. . . . All agree that Prinny will die or go mad. He is worn out with fuss, fatigue and *rage*. He came to Lady Salisbury on Sunday from his own dinner, beastly drunk, whilst her guests were all perfectly sober. It is reckoned very disgraceful in Russia for the higher orders to be drunk. He already abuses the Emperor lustily, and his [the Emperor's] waltzing with Lady Jersey last night at Lady Cholmondeley's would not mend his temper, and in truth

he only stayed five minutes, and went off sulky as a bear, whilst everybody else stayed and supped and were as merry as could be."

A story was current that the Grand Duchess purposely induced the Prince of Orange to take too much to drink just before a visit to Charlotte, so that the Princess should be disgusted; and Creevey alludes to the rumour in the following extract from one of Brougham's letters: "Young Frog was t'other day made remarkably drunk by a savage animal of the name of Wirtemberg (son of the *pickled* sister your friend) and in this predicament shown up to young P. among others. The savage took the opportunity of making love on his own score, and has been forbid C[arlton] house in consequence." The Hon. Amelia Murray tells the same story, but with more detail. "She [the Grand Duchess] gave grand dinners, and took care to invite the Prince of Orange the night he was to waltz in public with the Princess as her fiancé. The Grand Duchess plied him well with champagne, and the young man could hardly refuse the invitations of his hostess; he was made tipsy, and of course the Princess was disgusted." Miss Murray goes on with a statement of somewhat doubtful acceptancy. She says: "It was in Miss Elphinstone's apartments the charming Prince Leopold was presented. Was it to be wondered at that a girl of seventeen should prefer him to the former lover?"

Miss Murray's recollections in some instances can hardly be adopted altogether without question, but it is quite natural that, writing after a lapse of years, her memory should now and again play her false. About the time when she was listening to this piece of gossip, which she reproduced many years afterwards, the fashionable world went crazy over a "memory man," who had discovered an infallible system of remembering everything. In a letter to Miss Mary Frampton, her brother James writes: "There is now

a man in London who teaches people to have a memory. Lord Lansdowne is taking a lesson, so are Lord Spencer and his children. He manages it by supposing rooms with compartments, for Sir George Paul has got to the seventeenth room, each of which has fifty compartments. I should like to ask him what was in the forty-seventh compartment of the fiftieth room. I think it would puzzle him." Of course the system was infallible—systems always are; at the same time it may be hoped that the chroniclers of the day, the Grenvilles, the Glenbervies, the Charlotte Campbells, and the rest—even the precise Miss Knight—knew nothing of it. It is pretty certain they would have been hopelessly muddled had they taken lessons of the "memory man."

Whatever may have been the immediate cause, the differences between Charlotte and the Prince of Orange were becoming bitter, and they reached a climax over a very simple thing—not infrequently the case with lovers' quarrels. The Princess Charlotte wanted the Prince of Orange to ride with her; he started objections, and she reproached him, till, annoyed at her vehemence and pertinacity, he left her to recover her temper. This was too much, and in the evening she wrote peremptorily to say that their engagement must cease. Charlotte was in a white heat of rage. Her first note was dashed off in a fit of temper, and a friend who was with her, and whom she asked to light the candle for her to seal it, said, "I will not hold the candle to any such thing." Eventually she yielded to her friend's persuasions, and when her anger had cooled she wrote the following letter, which, while decisive enough, does not show temper:

*Princess Charlotte to the Prince of Orange*

WARWICK HOUSE,

June 16, 1814.

"After reconsidering, according to your wishes, the

conversation that passed between us this morning, I am still of opinion the duties and affection that naturally bind us to our respective countries render our marriage incompatible, not only from motives of policy but domestic happiness. From recent circumstances that have occurred, I am fully convinced that my interest is materially connected with that of my mother, and that my residence out of this kingdom would be equally prejudicial to her interest as to my own. As I can never forget the maternal claims she has upon my duty and attachment, I am equally aware of the claims your country has on you. It was this consideration, added to the design I had of complying with your wishes, that induced me some time ago to agree to accompany you to Holland, if I obtained satisfactory securities of having it in my power to return. Since that time the many unforeseen events that have occurred, particularly those regarding the Princess, make me feel it impossible to quit England at present, or to enter into any engagements leading to it at a future time.

“After what has passed upon this subject this morning between us (which was much too conclusive to require further explanation), I must consider our engagement from this moment to be *totally and for ever at an end*. I leave the explanation of this affair to be made by you to the Prince in whatever manner is most agreeable to you, trusting it entirely to your honour, of which I have never for a moment doubted. I cannot conclude without expressing the sincere concern I feel in being the cause of giving you pain, which feeling is, however, lessened in a degree by the hope I stand acquitted in your eyes of having acted dishonourably by you in the case of this business, or of having raised false hopes in your mind with respect to my consenting to a residence abroad. You must recollect in a letter from me in answer to yours of May 3, that I told you it was impossible for me to

give any promise on that subject, as it must totally depend upon circumstances. It only remains for me to entreat you to accept my sincerest and best wishes for your happiness, and to express the kindness and interest I shall always feel towards you.

“CHARLOTTE.”

This letter descended upon her fiancé like a bombshell, for when the Prince of Orange parted from Charlotte after their “tiff,” he had not the slightest idea of what was in store for him. In the evening he went to a ball at Hertford House, and there met a friend who had been present at the quarrel. He referred jestingly to the “tantrums” of the morning; the friend, however, told him it was no “laughing matter,” and so the Prince found it. On the next morning the letter reached him. He was unprepared for this sudden dismissal, but he bore it philosophically. He allowed two days to pass before noticing her communication, and then sent a dry note, in which he declined to be the medium of communicating the news of the rupture to the Prince Regent, and concluded with the words, “Hoping you shall never repent of the step you have taken, I remain,” etc., etc. “Pointing contemptuously to the mistake in the last sentence,” says Lady Rose Weigall, “the Princess Charlotte merely remarked to a friend who was with her when she received the note, ‘Good English he writes!’ The task of conveying the intelligence to her father now devolved upon herself, and his anger was fierce and protracted.”

In reference to the letter of rejection (a copy of which Princess Charlotte sent to her mother), Lady Charlotte Campbell writes: “I know too much of all parties to believe that Princess Charlotte in her heart quarrelled with her lover from any motive of real tenderness towards her mother. I believe that what the Princess of Wales told me some time ago is

perfectly true, namely, that her daughter did not at all admire the Prince of Orange, and only wanted to be her own mistress." No doubt there is foundation for this belief; at the same time, the arguments used by the Princess are sound and just, and it is not unlikely that Charlotte meant them as a thrust for the Regent. No step was taken by the latter until the departure of the Sovereigns, and for days the Princess was compelled to keep her room owing to a sprained knee. What with the pain and her sleepless nights, due to anxiety, she became very unwell, and the doctors were of opinion that she ought to go to the seaside for two or three months.

In the meantime Bishop Fisher had been taken into confidence by the Regent, and ultimately his lordship "hinted to Princess Charlotte in a private conversation, and to me [Miss Knight] *on paper*, as I wrote to him on the subject, that unless Princess Charlotte would write a submissive letter to her father, and hold out a hope that in a few months she might be induced to give her hand to the Prince of Orange, arrangements would be made by no means agreeable to her inclinations." Charlotte answered diplomatically. Her letter was submissive and apparently affectionate, but on the main point she was firm.

The Princess's reply was sent on July 9, and at this juncture Prince Leopold first appears on the scene as a possible successor of the rejected Prince of Orange; but of his feelings the young Princess herself, according to Miss Knight, was in total ignorance. Miss Knight says: "He had been once at Warwick House, the Duchess of Leeds and myself being present. Miss Mercer Elphinstone, who was intimately acquainted with him, came in while he was there. He paid many compliments to Princess Charlotte, who was by no mean partial to him, and only received him with civility. However, Miss Mercer evidently wishes to recommend him, and when he drove in the park he



would ride near the carriage and endeavour to be noticed. There were reasons why this matter was by no means agreeable to Princess Charlotte. However, he certainly made proposals to the Regent, and, though rejected, found means to get into his favour." Stockmar, however, as we shall have occasion to notice later on, questions Miss Knight's statement as to Prince Leopold's "endeavour to be noticed."

However this may be, rumours concerning Prince Leopold began to fly about. It was reported that he was frequently at Warwick House, and had taken tea with the Princess and Miss Knight; but this was quite untrue, the only personage of importance so entertained being Prince Augustus of Prussia. These stories reached the Regent's ears and added to his anger, and on July 11 the threatened blow descended. The morning of that day Bishop Fisher spent at Carlton House, and at five o'clock in the afternoon the Princess and Miss Knight were sent for. The Princess was too ill to obey, but Miss Knight went, and found the Regent "very cold, very bitter, and very silent." Miss Knight apologised for the absence of the Princess, to which the Regent replied that she must either come the next day, or Dr. Baillie must appear in person to say she was not capable of walking now.

In the course of the conversation with Miss Knight the Regent hinted at the rumours current in reference to Prince Leopold, and Charlotte wrote an indignant letter in consequence to the Bishop. In the course of this letter she said: "I believe your Lordship has known me long enough to know that severity of any kind rather injures than does a cause good *with me*, whereas kindness may do a good deal; at all events, it is more difficult to withstand. Anything but my friends' or my character being *aspersed* I may submit to; but this I neither can nor *will do*, as I owe it to myself positively to declare the *whole allegation to be*

*false* and a *base lie* to answer some very deep design which I cannot guess, as I am far from entering into any cabals. My word has as yet been doubted by no one, and I am as likely therefore to be believed as *any foreigner or native.*”

Events were rapidly moving, and on the next day the doctor said the Princess was quite capable of going to Carlton House, and advised her to do so. She was, however, really so ill and so much affected that it was impossible. She therefore wrote to the Regent, begging he would come to her. What followed is best told in Miss Knight's own words :

“ About six he [the Regent] came, attended by the Bishop only (as I supposed), but he came up alone and desired I would leave him with Princess Charlotte. He was shut up with her three-quarters of an hour, and afterwards a quarter more with the Bishop and her Royal Highness. The door then opened and she came out in the greatest agony, saying she had but one instant to speak to me, for that the Prince had asked for me. I followed her into her dining-room, where she told me the new ladies were in possession of the house ; that I and all the servants were to be dismissed ; that she was to be confined at Carlton House for five days, after which she was to be taken to Cranborne Lodge, in the midst of Windsor Forest, where she was to see no one but the Queen near a week, and that if she did not go immediately the Prince would sleep at Warwick House that night as well as all the ladies. I begged her to be calm and advised her to go on as soon as possible, assuring her that her family would not forget her. She fell on her knees in the greatest agitation, exclaiming, ‘ God Almighty, grant me patience ! ’ I wished to stay and comfort her, but she urged me to go to the Prince for fear of further displeasure.

“ I went to him and he shut the door. The Bishop was with him. He told me he was sorry to put a



PRINCESS CHARLOTTE IN HER BRIDAL DRESS.  
From an engraving by J. Hopwood after a miniature.



lady to inconvenience, but that he wanted my room that evening for the ladies, repeating what Princess Charlotte had already told me. I asked in what I had offended, but he said he made no complaint and would make none; that he had a perfect right to make any changes he pleased, and that he was blamed for having let things go on as they had done. . . . He then said that in the arrangements at Carlton House there was a room which I might have for a night or two if I had nowhere to go. This I declined, thanking him. . . . I then made a low courtesy to him and left the room.

“What was my astonishment when I could not find the Princess Charlotte anywhere, and when at length Miss Mercer and her maid, who had come (as was often the case) to dress her before dinner, appeared from my bedroom, the latter crying, and Miss Mercer saying she supposed Princess Charlotte was gone to her mother!

“The Prince came forward when I returned to the dressing-room, and I brought Miss Mercer, who desired I would do so, that she might not be suspected of anything clandestine. She told him that as she was dressing herself in Princess Charlotte's bedroom she heard her say she would go to her mother, and before they could prevent it she had disappeared. The Prince was very cool, and rather seemed pleased, saying that he was glad that everybody would now see what she was, and that it would be known on the Continent, and no one would marry her. Miss Mercer cried, and said she hoped he did not think her to blame. . . .”

In her account of the dramatic scene Mrs. Rachel Jones supplies a few additional details. The descent of the Regent was planned with such completeness that at the very moment when he was announcing to the Princess that her attendants were about to be changed, five ladies were in the next room, whom he

proposed to bring in and introduce to her. She begged for a few minutes' respite, and left the room. Then suddenly, "like a hunted animal she turned and fled. Her dresser, Mrs. Louis, was in the Princess's bedroom when she ran to it to put on her bonnet, as was also her most intimate friend, Miss Mercer Elphinstone. The latter, too much surprised to act or take any part at the moment, heard the Princess exclaiming that she must go to her mother; but Mrs. Louis was under the impression that she was going over to Carlton House, and handed her her tall straw bonnet with the vertical feather, and the little shawl to cover her arms and shoulders. 'Well, if ever I saw the Princess Charlotte in my life, I saw her run down the back stairs just now,' remarked an amazed footman, who was reprimanded for the impossible suggestion. The Princess must equally have astonished the two sentries at the entrance of the little court in front of Warwick House, as she crossed it quickly from the front door and flitted past them, her white gown gleaming in the summer twilight. She ran down the narrow dark lane and on to Charing Cross. There was a stand of hackney-coaches, . . . and of this homely convenience the Princess availed herself to reach Connaught House, where her mother was then living. She offered the driver a sovereign to take her there safely and quickly, and set off past the royal mews, which occupied the centre of the present Trafalgar Square, then along Cockspur Street, passing alarmingly near Carlton House."

Continuing with Miss Knight's story we read that "The Bishop and Miss Mercer offered to go and look for her, and proposed my accompanying them, which I refused, saying I should wait, for that I did not wish to be in *that* house—meaning the Princess of Wales's—but that if I went, and Princess Charlotte asked me to stay with her, I could not refuse remaining with her there *or in a prison.*"

Of what happened afterwards Brougham gives a full account. In his Autobiography he says :

“ I was dining at Michael Angelo Taylor's, and in the midst of dinner a message came to me that I was wanted at Connaught Place, the residence of the Princess of Wales. I had been up almost all the night before in a cause, and in consequence of this was exceedingly fatigued. I conceived that this was one of the many occasions on which the Princess sent for me unnecessarily, and that the message being verbal must be owing to the accident of her lady-in-waiting being out of the way ; and I said I was unable to go. The messenger sent back word that I was wanted on most particular business, and that a coach was waiting at the door by express commands. I was obliged to comply, and fell asleep as soon as I stepped into it, not awaking till it reached Connaught Place. I stumbled upstairs, still half-asleep, to the drawing-room. To my astonishment, I found both my hands seized by the Princess Charlotte, who said how impatient she had been at the delay, which was owing to her messenger having first gone to my chambers in the Temple. I asked by what extraordinary accident I had the honour and pleasure of seeing her Royal Highness there. She said, ‘ Oh, it is too long to tell now, for I have ordered dinner, and I hope it will soon come up.’ She only added that she had come out of Warwick House alone, and had got into the first hackney-coach she could see in Cockspur Street, and had sent to Blackheath for her mother, who had arrived some time after with Lady Charlotte Lindsay. We sat down to dinner, and she was in high spirits, seeming to enjoy herself like a bird set loose from its cage. I said I had nearly dined before her message reached me. She said, ‘ You may eat a little bit with us, and at any rate you can carve.’ I said the only dish I could carve was the soup. However, the dinner went on very merrily. Miss Mercer (afterwards Lady

Keith and wife of Count Flahault) had been sent by the Prince as soon as her flight from Warwick House was known, there being no doubt entertained as to where she had gone.

“ I happened to know that the Duke of Sussex dined in the neighbourhood, and I wrote a note to beg he would come, which he did in the course of an hour. There came while we were at table various persons sent by the Regent : the Chancellor Eldon, Bishop of Salisbury (the tutor), Ellenborough, Adam Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall, and Leach. All arrived one after another, and as they were announced, the Princess or her daughter said what was to be done with each. Eldon being named, they said, ‘ Oh no ; let him wait in his carriage,’ which was, like that of the Princess Charlotte and all the others, a hackney-coach. I said a word for Ellenborough as my chief, but in vain. They said, ‘ He may remain as well as old Baggs.’ When Leach was named, they called him ‘ Ridicule,’ ‘ Reticule,’ or ‘ Little Baggs.’ But the Bishop was ordered to be shown into the dining-room below—we having dined in the drawing-room above-stairs ; and so was the Duke of York, who came much later. The Duke of Sussex, not having been sent by the Regent, was brought upstairs ; and none of the others had any communication with our party except the Duke of York, whom the Princess of Wales saw for a few minutes in the room below. It happened, unfortunately, that the Duke of Sussex for the last nine years had not seen the Princess of Wales, or had any communication with her, in consequence of the charge against her which led to the proceedings in 1806 having been made as a communication to him by Lady Douglas, wife of his equerry, and conveyed by the Duke to the Regent. However, no one could have supposed there was the least dryness between them, to see how warmly they embraced. Indeed the Duke had taken no



further part in the proceedings than communicating Lady Douglas's story, which he was bound to do. He and the Princess talked in German, but this was well understood by the Princess Charlotte and also by Miss Mercer, so that nothing was concealed which passed.

“After dinner I first begged the Princess Charlotte to give me a full account of what had caused her flight. She said she could not bear any longer the treatment she met with of changing her ladies without her consent, and of interrupting her intercourse with her mother and Margaret (meaning Miss Mercer), her most intimate friend; and that it was her most fixed resolution, after throwing herself on her mother's protection, to reside with her entirely. But she dwelt much upon the match; and though I repeated what I had often assured her of, that without her consent freely given it never could take place, she said, ‘They may wear me out by ill-treatment, and may represent that I have changed my mind and consented.’ We then conversed upon the subject with the others, and after a long discussion on that and her lesser grievances, she took me aside and asked me what, upon the whole, I advised her to do. I said at once, ‘Return to Warwick House or Carlton House, and on no account to pass a night out of her own house.’ She was extremely affected, and cried, asking if I too refused to stand by her. I said quite the contrary, and that as to the marriage I gave no opinion, except that she must follow her own inclination entirely, but that her returning home was absolutely necessary; and in this all the rest fully agreed—her mother, the Duke of Sussex, Miss Mercer, and Lady Charlotte Lindsay, for whom she had a great respect and regard. I said that, however painful it was for me, the necessity was so clear and so strong that I had not the least hesitation in advising it. She again and again begged me to consider her situa-

tion, and to think whether, looking to that, it was absolutely necessary she should return.

“The day now began to dawn, and I took her to the window. The election of Cochrane (after his expulsion owing to the sentence of the court, which both insured his re-election and abolished the Pillory) was to take place that day. I said, ‘Look there, Madam: in a few hours all the streets and the park, now empty, will be crowded with tens of thousands. I have only to take you to that window, and show you to the multitude and tell them your grievances, and they will all rise in your behalf.’ ‘And why should they not?’ I think she said, or some such words. ‘The commotion,’ I answered, ‘will be excessive; Carlton House will be attacked—perhaps pulled down; the soldiers will be ordered out; blood will be shed; and if your Royal Highness were to live a hundred years, it never would be forgotten that your running away from your father’s house was the cause of the mischief: and you may depend upon it, such is the English people’s horror of bloodshed, you never would get over it.’ She at once felt the truth of my assertion, and consented to see her uncle Frederic (the Duke of York) below stairs, and return with him. But she required one of the royal carriages should be sent for, which came with her governess, and they with the Duke of York went home about five o’clock. Before she went, however, she desired me to make a minute of her declaration that she was resolved not to marry the Prince of Orange, and that if ever there should be an announcement of such a match, it must be understood to be without her consent and against her will. She added, ‘I desire Augustus [Duke of Sussex], and Mr. Brougham would particularly take notice of this.’ When I had made the note, it was read distinctly and signed by all present, she signed first, and six copies were made and signed, and one given to each person

present. Her positive injunction was, that if ever we heard the match announced as being to proceed, we should make her declaration in the note public."

The conflict was over and the rebellious Princess, in the custody of the Duke of York, was taken to Carlton House, a hackney-coach containing the Duke of Sussex, the Chancellor, and a couple of lawyers, following; but Charlotte's captors were so bewildered what to do with her that when the party reached Carlton House, she was made to remain in the courtyard for more than half an hour while they were debating within how she ought to be received.

The affair was, of course, the talk of the town, and among other versions of the story was one charging the Duke of Sussex with having connived at the Princess's escape. The Duke was very much distressed at the rumour, and subsequently he said to Sergeant Adolphus, "I declare solemnly I never heard a word of it until after it had taken place. I was dining at the house of a nobleman when a note was brought me from Charlotte. As she wrote a most illegible scrawl, I did not attempt to decipher it, but put it in my pocket. Shortly after came another note. Conceiving then it might be something important, I read it, and having done so excused myself to my party, went off to Connaught Place, to the house of the Princess of Wales. Going in, I saw a person whom I had never seen before, and who, the Princess informed me, was Mr. Brougham. 'He is, I presume, your legal adviser.' Being told he was, I addressed him. 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'supposing the Prince Régent, acting in the name and on behalf of his Majesty, were to send a sufficient force to break the doors of the house and carry away the Princess, would any resistance in such case be lawful?' He answered, 'It would not.' 'Then, my dear,' said I to the Princess Charlotte, 'you hear what the law is. I can only advise you to return with as much

speed and 'as little noise as possible,' and my advice was followed."

Greville, some years later, recorded, on the authority of Miss Mercer Elphinstone, a slightly different account of Charlotte's rebellion and flight, and of the reason which led up to the affair. He wrote: "I met at Brighton Lady Keith (Madame de Flahault), who . . . gave us rather an amusing account of the early days of the Princess Charlotte at the time of her escape from Warwick House in a hackney-coach and taking refuge with her mother, and of the earlier affairs of Captain Hesse. The former escapade arose from her determination to break off her marriage with the Prince of Orange, and that, from her sudden falling in love with Prince Augustus of Prussia and her resolving to marry him and nobody else, not knowing that he was already married *de la main gauche* in Prussia. It seems she speedily made known her sentiments to the Prince (of Prussia), and he (notwithstanding his marriage) followed the thing up and had two interviews with her at her own house, which were contrived by Miss Knight, her governess. During one of these Miss Mercer arrived, and Miss Knight told her that Prince Augustus was with the Princess in her room, and what a fright she [Miss Knight] was in. Miss Mercer, who evidently had no mind anybody should conduct an affair for the Princess but herself, pressed Miss Knight to go and interrupt them, which on her declining she did herself. The King (Regent as he was then) somehow heard of these meetings, and measures of coercion were threatened, and it was just when the approaching visit from him had been announced to the Princess that she went off. Miss Mercer was in the house at the time, and the Regent when he came found her there. He accused her of being a party to the Princess's flight, but afterwards he believed, or pretended to believe, her denial, and sent her to fetch the Princess

back, which after many *pour parlers* and the intervention of the Dukes . . . was accomplished at two in the morning." Miss Knight's version is no doubt correct, as Greville's recollection of his conversation with Madame de Flahault may not only be hazy but coloured by his propensity to make the most of a piece of gossip.

No one knows what occurred at the first meeting between Princess Charlotte and the Regent after her escapade. Probably it did not amount to more than cold politeness on both sides. Experience must have convinced the father that further hostilities would only expose him to humiliation, and Charlotte having yielded so far as to return to his guardianship, the sooner the matter was dropped and forgotten the better. The Princess had won the day in regard to her choice of a husband, and the Prince of Orange wisely went back to the land of his birth; in all likelihood secretly glad he was not going to marry so tempestuous a young woman.

Miss Knight's attendance upon the Princess Charlotte had ended; the last act of friendship on the part of the faithful companion was to convey a letter, written in pencil on a piece of stolen paper, to the Duke of Sussex. This letter was sent from Carlton House, where Charlotte was practically treated as a prisoner, a few days before she was exiled to Cranborne Lodge.

## CHAPTER XXIV

1814—1815

Princess Charlotte banished to Cranborne Lodge—Her strict surveillance—Takes farewell of her mother, who leaves England for the Continent—Mystery of her departure—Charlotte's unhappiness—Becomes more friendly with the Queen—At Weymouth with Lady Ilchester—Stories of her doings at Weymouth—Was she in communication with Prince Leopold?—Varied statements.

**C**RANBORNE LODGE, to which Princess Charlotte was now consigned with her new staff of ladies (of whom Mrs. Campbell, her old sub-governess under Lady de Clifford, was one), was a small isolated house in Windsor Park. She removed to her new residence on July 18, and the Regent took care to make her understand that there was to be none of her former freedom. She had to relinquish all her old friends, and they dared not approach her, however willing they might be to give her consolation. Even the one who had taken no part in the trouble was not allowed to pay the Princess a visit previous to leaving London for the Continent. Permission was given her to write, but only on condition of sending her letters under cover to Lady Ilchester, who had taken the place of the Duchess of Leeds. In Princess Charlotte's first letter, written at her place of seclusion, dated August 10, Lady Rose Weigall tells us, she says she does not "know what rules and regulations there are," but that since she has been there (Cranborne Lodge) "no one has called even to write his name down," and that she "has not seen a soul."

She thought that if her friend made "a special request" to the Prince Regent to be allowed to see her, "it could scarcely be refused," but she was doubtful. Her doubts were well founded, for grudgingly permission was withheld, although the friend would be absent for a year. She wrote quite despondently that "no visits were allowed till her return to Weymouth." This made her "quite hopeless and spiritless"—and little wonder.

The only break in the monotony of what was virtually an imprisonment was a formal drive to Connaught Place to pay a parting visit to the Princess of Wales, who was about to depart for the Continent. The failure of her mother to champion her cause after her desperate flight from Warwick House had caused Charlotte's affection to wane, and the coolness which had arisen was further increased by the Princess Caroline's resolve to leave England—a step she took against the advice of all her friends and counsellors. This formal visit formed the last meeting between mother and daughter, and it is very doubtful whether they corresponded, beyond the letter Charlotte was "permitted" to write after the death of the Duke of Brunswick and Caroline's reply. The singular manner in which the Princess of Wales withdrew herself from all association with her daughter has never been explained. It might have been from consideration for Charlotte, knowing that when she herself was out of the way, one of the Regent's grievances against the young Princess would be removed, but there is no evidence of this. The Princess of Wales never had the slightest intention of relinquishing any of her rights, as her endeavours, five years later, to be present at the Coronation fully show, and up to the time of the crisis at Warwick House she had always claimed the rights of a mother. It may be said that she was weary of the constant conflict and the espionage to which she was subjected, but if this were so it would

hardly have led to her separating herself from all her former friends and associates, for of her fairly large circle of intimates at Blackheath and Kensington Palace only Sir W. Gell, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, and Dr. Holland accompanied her into exile.

Some other solution of the puzzle must be sought for, and it is difficult to prevent the "mystery," to which we have alluded from time to time as fitting circumstances arose, from coming into view. The position of affairs at this juncture seems to justify further speculation. Charlotte had now arrived at womanhood. She was showing signs of intending to lead her own life, in spite of all the Regents in the world, and the Princess of Wales may have thought that her responsibilities as a mother were over. It is fairly evident, at any rate, that Charlotte had come to see that she could no longer depend upon the Princess Caroline for support in the time of trouble, and the attitude of her mother must have pained the girl beyond measure. It was not as if Charlotte had been cold, indifferent, or wanting in affection or respect, nor was it that she had sided with the Regent, for the contrary was, and always had been, the case. Yet at the very time when she was being treated by the Prince as if she were a culprit past forgiveness, and when she was yearning for a mother's advice and love, that mother turned from her, gave her a cold farewell, and departed as though she had taken leave of her child for ever. The thing is inexplicable, save by the Princess of Wales herself. All that can be said is that whatever may have been Caroline's motive for her self-banishment, it only adds to the pathos of Charlotte's life.

In the meantime the poor young Princess was penned up in the isolated house in Windsor Park, and, as Lady Rose Weigall points out, "instead of the anticipated establishment of ladies to be chosen by herself, she was surrounded by a new set of persons



who were all strangers to her, many of whom she disliked, and her keen sense of loneliness was complete. Naturally gay and light-hearted, she sank into despondency and contracted a suspiciousness and constant dread of annoyance, at variance with her years and her temperament. She retained, however, her charm of manner and expression, and much of her popularity with the mass of the people arose from her frank look, her genial, merry smile, and her cordial gestures, though beneath this bright exterior acute observers would remark a curious mixture of alarmed vigilance and uneasiness, as if, while wishing to give pleasure by her kindly, good-humoured notice of people who crowded to see her, she was all the time on the look-out for some annoyance or reproof to herself. She liked being noticed, and gratefully accepted the marks of goodwill shown to her when she appeared in public; and her youth and the reports of her spirited conduct were, of course, reasons for rousing popular feeling in her favour, even had her manner and appearance been less striking than they were." Creevey, in his flippant fashion, crystallises her position thus: "Young P. is as ill off as ever —no money, sale of trinkets to pay pensioners, etc.; an old lady sleeping in the room, etc., etc."

During this spring the Court circle was much occupied in discussing the approaching marriage of the Duke of Cumberland with the Princess Frederica Sophia, daughter of Charles Louis, Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. The lady was very handsome and her figure was unusually fine, but she was by no means acceptable to the Queen, owing to the fact that she had been divorced from her previous husband, the Prince of Solms. "Good Queen Charlotte" was always in hot water with one or another of her relatives; she was slow to forget, still slower to forgive; and peccadilloes, especially when the sinner happened to be a woman, were magnified into crimes. It was

significant of her suspicious character that she should be afraid lest Charlotte might take sides against her in the latest family squabble, and so she hurried her granddaughter to Weymouth in July in order to keep her out of the way of the new influence.

But she need not have been alarmed. The young Princess was as just as she was warm-hearted, and in the following letter, written from Warwick House, there is little doubt she expressed her genuine feelings : “ The Queen’s conduct I hope you will admire as I think it deserves ; indeed, the whole country is with her. The discussions in the family are grievous, and the terms they are on very bad ; she has been nearly dead with all she has gone through. . . . As to me, nothing can be so wretchedly uncertain and uncomfortable as my situation ; no changes for the better. I see nothing of *him* [her father], though next door, and indeed now one yard serves us both, for there is no entrance here now but through Carlton House yard. I am allowed to see but few of those I really like, though a *large list* has been given ; but whom I could not like to receive I have never invited here. The same ladies continue ; there are not many of them agreeable to me, some far from it, but the evil one knows is better than what one does not. . . . My family are very kind to me, as far as they can be, but you know they can *say* and *do* nothing, but yet one likes to see and feel affection. . . . I am grown thin, sleep ill, and eat but little. Baillie [the doctor] says my complaints are all nervous, and that bathing and sailing will brace me ; but I say *oh no!* no good can be done whilst the mind and soul are on the rack constantly, and the spirits forced and screwed up to a certain pitch. . . . I always think six months got over of the dreadful life I lead, six months gained ; but when the time comes for moving from place to place, I do it with reluctance, from never knowing my lot or what next may befall me. ‘ *Esperance et*

*constance* ' is my motto, and alone supports me in it all ! ”

The Princess had not been well for some time. The severance from her mother filled the 'cup of her worries, and her affectionate nature must have been wounded by Caroline's coldness much more than she permitted others to see. Months passed, and then came the battle of Waterloo and the death of her favourite uncle the Black Duke of Brunswick. In August she wrote one of her warm-hearted letters to Lady Charlotte Campbell, in which she said :

“ I cannot close this letter without returning my best acknowledgments for your condolence with and enquiries after me, in consequence of the fall of my glorious (as well as much-beloved) uncle. I bore it as I trust a Christian ought, bowing to the will of the All-wise Being ; but it was a grievous circumstance—a dreadful, irremediable loss to me, for the great possess few real friends. In him I had a warm and constant one, allied, too, by the closest ties of blood. I loved him with the fondest affection, and am confident he returned the sentiment. His death was so glorious, so completely what he always desired for himself—that if it was decreed that he should so early in life quit this world, he could not close his career more gloriously or more worthy of a hero as he was and of that father and that blood he descended from.

“ Pardon me if I seem enthusiastic in my expressions, but I confess this is a topic which warms every feeling of my heart and mind. You knew him [a word illegible] impartially, if I say too much in his favour. My health I do not think has suffered from this shock ; but I have not been really well for some time past. . . . I trust my mother continues well, and that she has not been very much shocked by the death of her brother. I hope she has got a letter. *I was permitted to write to her on the sad event.*”

This letter was written from Weymouth, where she was accompanied by Lady Ilchester, who, at the time of the dismissal of the Duchess of Leeds, Miss Knight, and the other ladies, the year before, as already mentioned, had been "lent," so we read, "very much against her inclination," by Queen Charlotte, to whom she was a lady-in-waiting, "to assist in forming the new establishment of the Princess Charlotte." Mrs. Campbell, the Princess's old sub-governess, of whom she was very fond, was also in attendance. Mrs. Campbell—who, it will be remembered, had been summarily dismissed some years before over Charlotte's childish freak of making her will—was now taken into favour by the Regent, and her appointment gladdened Charlotte's heart somewhat.

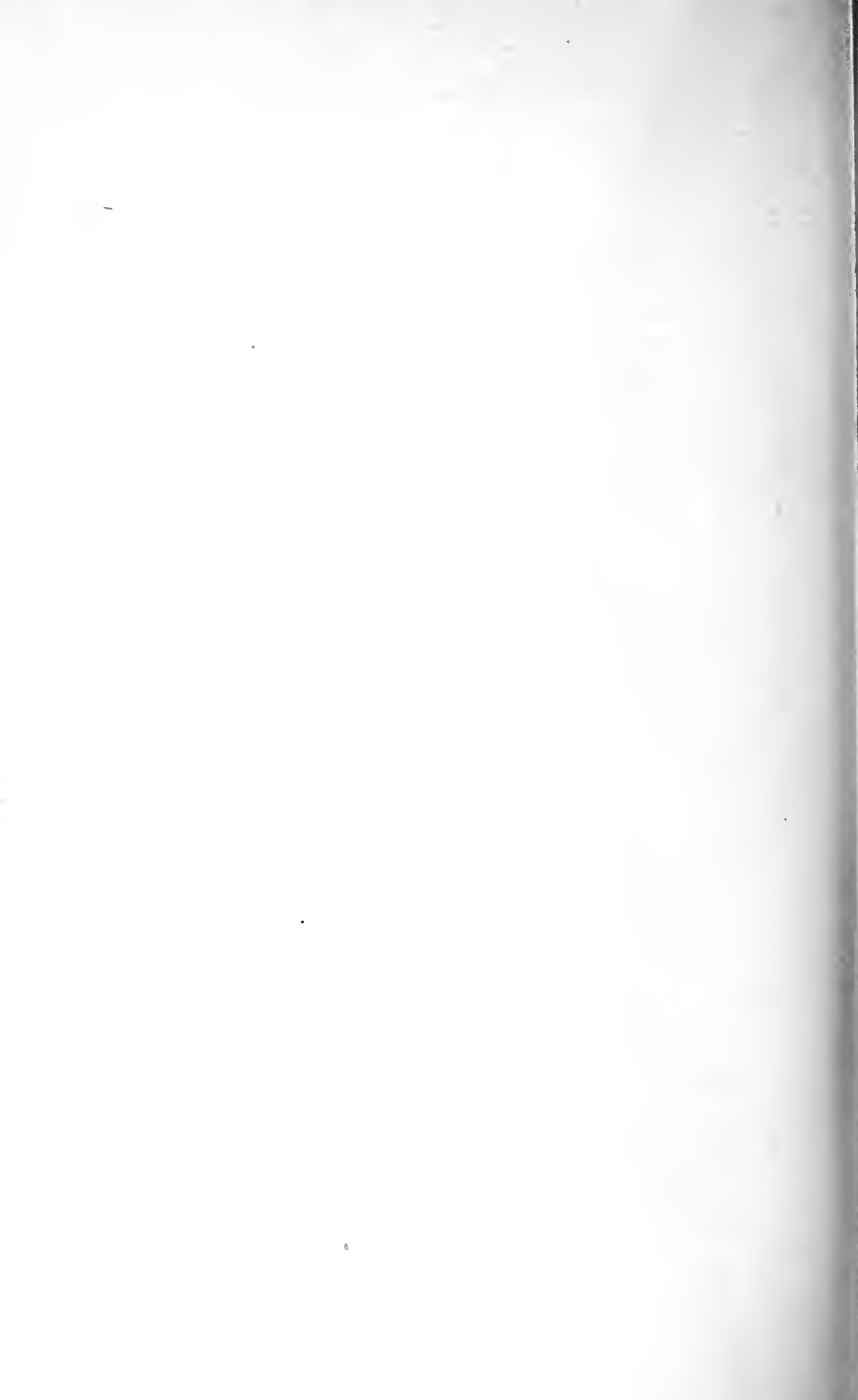
Even at Weymouth the Carlton House system of espionage was still in force, and everything that was said or done was scrupulously and jealously watched. When the continual repression, the misrepresentation of harmless words and actions, the sensation of being constantly shadowed, are remembered, it is marvellous the Princess did not permanently lose her buoyancy of spirit and her natural warm-heartedness. It may have been, as an acute critic has observed, that "the unfortunate position in which the Princess grew up has had a fortunate effect on her education—at least it has prevented that exhaustion and impoverishment of character which are so common in Court life." However this may be, at Weymouth her despondency passed away, and the glimpses we have of her at this period are quite suggestive of her real sunny nature.

She went out a good deal, and one of her expeditions was to Lulworth Castle, near which is a monastery where a number of the Trappist brethren had been domiciled since the dispersion of the great La Trappe Monastery in Normandy at the time of the French Revolution. "One autumn day," Mrs. Rachel Jones relates, "the good saints, twenty-four in number,



PRINCESS CHARLOTTE AND PRINCE LEOPOLD IN THEIR BOX AT COVENT  
GARDEN THEATRE.

From an engraving after George Dawe, R.A.



bound to abjure speech, devilries, and ladies' looks, were startled out of their round of vigil, Latin, and penance by the sudden descent upon them of a woman—a princess—a pretty woman—a loquacious, inquisitive, dauntless princess—who demanded the favour of inspecting the interior of their hallowed abode. The porter, who, although one of the compatriots, was allowed to talk, came to the gate in a hideous habit of dark rough cloth, his heavy keys suspended from a leathern girdle. He took the news of the Princess's arrival to the abbot, who, much exercised, compelled by vow to exclude a woman, luckily recollected that the rule of the Order permitted Royalty to penetrate to any part of the monastery. The Princess availed herself of this royal privilege, and quite alone, leaving her ladies outside—her gay summer costume and youthful *embonpoint* contrasting with the spare fathers in their never-changed black-and-white monastic habits—was escorted by the abbot through the monastery and its precincts. . . . The Princess Charlotte was shown the garden, . . . and finally she was taken to the refectory, where, all the plate being sacred to the uses of the church, she was offered in wooden bowls the only fare of the monastery, milk, brown bread, vegetables and rice."

The pompous and fussy but well-meaning Bishop of Salisbury paid her a visit while she was at Weymouth, and by this time she had recovered a little of her old gay and boisterous spirits. Perhaps the presence of the great U.P., as she called Bishop Fisher, acted as a tonic. It is on record that she was in her yacht one day with the Bishop on board, when the royal flag was saluted by the *Leviathan*, a warship of 74 guns. The captain was rowed to the yacht, and paid his respects to the Princess, who expressed a wish to inspect the battleship. As this involved being rowed in a small boat on rather a rough sea, the Bishop was greatly alarmed at her daring. She was

not now to be influenced by the arguments of her reverend mentor, and she was lowered into the boat, the Bishop and two ladies having to follow. After a stormy passage, during which the party were half-drenched, to Charlotte's infinite amusement, the boat reached the *Leviathan*, when a chair of state was let down to hoist her Royal Highness on board. To this honour she strenuously objected, exclaiming, "I prefer going up in the manner that a seaman does. Captain Nixon, you will be kind enough to take care of my clothes, and when I am on deck then the chair may be let down for the remainder of the party."

A story went the rounds that it was for the especial use of the Bishop that the chair was let down, in order to make him ridiculous; but this was not the fact—the chair was intended for the whole of the party. Anyway, it is said that her Royal Highness ascended the side of the vessel with an agility which delighted and astonished the Jack Tars—which one may well believe.

Miss Mary Frampton writes: "My father used constantly to sail with the Princess, and generally also accompanied her on any expeditions—to Portland, Lulworth Cove, Corfe Castle, etc., occasionally, as at the little *hostelries* of the latter places, where the Princess had luncheon, acting as her privy purse.

"My mother, who disliked sailing as much as my father enjoyed it, was, however, once or twice prevailed upon to accept the repeated invitations of H.R.H., when I was included in the party on board the Queen's yacht, the *Royal Charlotte*. I well remember the Princess saying to me, 'Are you sick, Harriot?' and in my confusion I answered, while making my curtsy, 'No, thank you, ma'am,' to her great amusement. She wore yellow Hessian boots and the high bonnet then in fashion. We had a capital luncheon in the state cabin—cold meat, etc., of course—as hot luncheons were unknown until at



least twenty years after, but the Princess took her repast seated on a sofa on deck with the plate on her lap. When asked what H.R.H would have, she said, 'Cold beef,' and then called out rather loudly, 'with plenty of mustard.' Later in the autumn and during the winter Princess Charlotte was accustomed to read aloud of an evening, whilst the ladies at the Royal Lodge worked. She had been well instructed, and read beautifully, and my mother especially used to enjoy this, which indeed every one of the party found a great improvement on the sameness of the usual conversation."

There were signs at this time that the old enmity between her and the Queen was dying away. Queen Charlotte was softening towards the harassed girl, and Miss Frampton notes the change. "The Queen and three Princesses," she writes, "came this morning. She is indeed altered. All seemed happy to see Princess Charlotte. The Queen was certainly very nervous, and we talked on various uninteresting subjects and steered clear of all enquiries or allusions to past correspondence." In a word, everybody who had anything to do with the Princess, either in the present or the past, was afraid of everybody else. The air was charged with the mystery of intrigue, and hovering over all was the suspicious, malevolent, blighting influence of Carlton House.

But the Princess Charlotte's youth, courage, and hopefulness were powerful allies, not easily overcome, and later on Miss Frampton tells us that "there is an air of happiness and content about her which I have not seen before." This is borne out by an incident related in Miss Amelia Murray's *Recollections*, not much in itself, but significant of the lightheartedness which was gradually regaining its sway. "One day," writes Miss Murray, "she was sitting on the great bank of pebbles which extends from Portland to Bridport, when she saw some village

children, attracted by the royal liveries, climb to the top of the beach to get sight of the Princess. She watched them, and as some of the loose pebbles they displaced rolled down towards her, with her gayest manner she called out, 'Hallo, there! Princess Charlotte is made of ginger-bread. If you do that you'll break her.'" Another incident recorded by Miss Murray is in a different vein. During a visit she paid to Lord Ilchester, she was presented with a bouquet, and observing that it contained some orange flowers, she quietly took them out, and flinging them away, exclaimed, "None of those, thank you!"

Towards the end of the year matters began to mend. The Princess was back at Cranborne Lodge, and though she was still treated coldly by the Regent, she was allowed more liberty. The question of her marriage was again on the tapis, and as by this time her father had become conscious of the futility of imposing upon her a husband who was not to her liking, he wisely allowed her to choose for herself. His Royal Highness had had a bitter experience of Princess Charlotte's firmness, and after one ignominious failure he did not wish to risk a second.

The probability is that she had already made her choice. Some of Charlotte's biographers are under the impression that during the time of her trouble, when she was in seclusion, she had no thought of Prince Leopold as a suitor, but this may be doubted. Gronow records that during the visit of the continental Royalties in the previous summer the Duke of York said to his niece, "Tell me, my dear, have you seen any one among the foreign princes whom you would like to have for a husband?" The Princess naively replied, "No one so much prepossessed me as Prince Leopold of Coburg. I have heard much of his bravery in the field, and I must say he is personally agreeable to me. I have particularly heard of his famous cavalry charge at the battle of Leipsic,

where he took several thousand prisoners, for which he was rewarded with the order of Maria Theresa."

The "several thousand prisoners" suggests Charlotte's fervid imagination, but that he attracted her is likely to be true, for Prince Leopold was one of the handsomest men of the day, and his tall figure and manly bearing would make him noticeable in any assembly. The young Princess could not fail to draw comparisons between Leopold, who was the beau-ideal of a lover, and the sickly, commonplace Prince of Orange.

The probability of Gronow's story being well founded is supported by Baron Stockmar, who was closely associated with the Prince previous to his marriage. According to the Baron, the Princess herself said that from her first meeting with Leopold, she wished to become better acquainted with him, and had expressed this to her aunt the Duchess of York, regretting that it was so difficult for her, as she was excluded from the Court festivities. Her aunt therefore promised to give a ball for her at which she should meet the Prince. Stockmar adds: "She seems to have come to an understanding with him tolerably soon."

There is no reason why the Princess should not have cherished a lively recollection of the handsome Leopold and Miss Knight be kept in ignorance. A girl of seventeen is not ready to confide the secrets of her heart to an old maid. Apart from this, Miss Knight, amiable and trustworthy as she was, would hardly have been chosen as a confidante, seeing that she had been appointed by the Regent with the express object of acting towards Charlotte as a sort of duenna. Her very conscientiousness in regard to carrying out her duties placed a barrier between her and her charge. The prim, proper, and somewhat simple-minded lady companion appears to have known very little of Charlotte's flirtations. She has nothing

to say about Captain Hesse, who, according to Gronow and Miss Mercer Elphinstone, came near to being a real lover; and she is very discreet in her allusions to the Prince of Prussia. Of course Miss Knight may have known more than she cared to set down in her "Autobiography," but the most reasonable supposition is that Princess Charlotte managed her love-affairs by herself, perhaps with the occasional assistance of her friend Miss Mercer.

On the first visit of Prince Leopold to England the Regent was somewhat prejudiced against him, but the young man had infinite tact, and his manners were so winning, and his reputation as a man of honour and resolution stood so high, that he gradually wore down opposition. The Dukes of York and Kent were favourable towards him, and after his departure from London at the end of July the Duke of Kent, according to Stockmar, enabled him now and then to have some communication with the Princess, who on her side let him know that her feelings were unchanged. This is in direct contradiction to the statement of Lady Rose Weigall, who, drawing her conclusions from the letter in which Charlotte supported the Queen in her hostility towards the Duchess of Cumberland, remarks that "it is evident that she had no suspicion of Prince Leopold's intention to come forward as a suitor."

Stockmar's version is the more likely one. The Princess knew very well she was surrounded by spies, and that nothing was so easy as the distortion of harmless words and actions, and she was probably extremely cautious as to how she wrote, even to intimate friends. So far from being ignorant of the Prince's affection for her, we read in Stockmar that "she and her political friends wished the Prince to visit England again to urge his suit. But Leopold saw the danger he ran of offending the Regent, and only increasing the difficulties in his way, and held

back." Charlotte naturally was disappointed, and with her impulsive disposition was inclined to regard the Prince's prudence as excess of caution, but the sequel proved that Leopold was right.

The gossip of the day supports Stockmar's story of the love-affair. Miss Murray says that after the rupture with the Prince of Orange and the flight to Connaught House, Charlotte "consented to go to Cumberland [? Cranborne] Lodge and afterwards to Weymouth . . . upon this understanding, that if she should be in the same mind at the end of twelve months, she would have the Prince Regent's consent to her marriage with Prince Leopold." It may not be that any definite "understanding" was arrived at, as Miss Murray suggests, but it can be taken for granted that the subsequent marriage was one of an affection which had been quietly growing for some time, and was not in any sense an "arranged" affair. If this assumption was the fact, it adds to the pathos of the Princess's short life.

## CHAPTER XXV

1816—1817

Prince Leopold—His history—The Prince invited to London by the Regent—The betrothal—Charlotte's happiness—Pleasant times at the Pavilion, Brighton—Public satisfaction—Peter Pindar's lampoons—The wedding at Carlton House—Princess Charlotte's quiet life at Claremont—Husband and wife devoted to each other—The expected birth—Sir Richard Croft's mistaken regimen—An anxious time—The Princess's marvellous fortitude—Her death—The mourning of the nation—Conclusion.

IT has been said that one of the reasons why the Princess Charlotte took a dislike to the Prince of Orange was that while in London he lodged at his tailor's! Considering that the Prince was in high favour with the Regent, and remembering the object which brought him to London, this is hardly likely to have been the case. It may be, however, that whoever set the report about was confusing the Prince of Orange with Prince Leopold. Among the host of "Memoirs," "Laments," to say nothing of the flood of sermons, which appeared in 1817 after the calamity at Claremont, was a biography published by W. Hone with the terribly unwieldy title of "*Authentic Memoirs of the Life of the Late Lamented Princess Charlotte*," with clear statements showing the succession to the Crown and the probability of the wife of Jerome Buonaparte becoming Queen, and her son, Jerome Napoleon, being Prince of Wales, and afterwards King of these realms." We need not trouble about these portentous "probabilities."

They belong to the "startling" announcements of modern journalism, made one day to be forgotten the next; but one paragraph relating to Prince Leopold's first visit to London can be quoted as bearing on the current gossip over the Prince of Orange, and the cause of his dismissal. The author, dealing with what happened in 1814, when London was full of Royalties of various denominations, writes :

"Prince Leopold resided all this time at a tradesman's house, wholly unsuspectful of the greatness that was preparing to crown him. Extraordinary as these particulars may now seem, such was nevertheless the salvation of Prince Leopold during four weeks out of five of his first visit to our metropolis. He then lodged at the house of Mr. Hole, a grocer, No. 21, High Street, Mary-le-bone. He first visited the apartments himself, but declined taking them until his valet, a faithful servant who had been upwards of one-and-twenty years in his service, inspected the rooms and approved them. . . . When at Mr. Hole's he was accustomed to early rising and usually retired to rest about eleven o'clock, and whilst indoors he was engaged in reading and writing, chiefly perusing some military books and committing his observations to paper. He appeared to be thoughtful, and generally so. During his residence at this lodging-house he never was observed to be out of temper, and a female attendant observed, 'Nothing could put him out of humour so as to make him hungry. He was,' added she, 'so perfectly good-tempered and so affable! When he bowed his eyelids used to go down and his eyes used to drop like a young lady's; . . . but then he is so fine and manly and looks as one of the knights we read of in stories, all gallant and amiable.'"

There is no contradiction on record of the story, while reasons can be advanced why it might very likely be true. The Prince was very poor, his habits

were simple and retiring, and his position at the time was comparatively obscure. It must also be remembered that the London of 1814 was of limited area, and there was really not sufficient accommodation for the crowds of visitors who poured in from the Continent and elsewhere. Country people flocked to London "to get a peep from a garret window or an area grating at a hero or a Prince as they passed." The hotels and inns were crammed from basement to roof. No fitting lodgings could be found for one of the heroes—Count Platoff—and Lord James Murray offered him his house in Cumberland Place. The Hetman and his twelve Cossacks were there received and every attention offered them, but it was thrown away, the rough soldiers preferring the hall and the staircases to sumptuously furnished bedrooms. The lady who records this adds drily, "It may be imagined in what kind of state they left a pretty London abode."

Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld was born in the old hill-top castle in Saxony which once sheltered Luther, and where—inspired by the situation—the Reformer wrote the famous hymn "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott." Leopold's father was Francis, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and his mother the Princess of Reuss Ebersdorff. At the time of his birth his grandfather Duke Frederick was alive, and the childhood of Leopold was passed under the sway of his grandmother the Duchess of Coburg, who ruled every one around her. When Napoleon and his army swept across Germany in 1812, to meet their fate in the snow and icy blasts of Russia, Prince Leopold was among the first to take arms against the invader. He joined the Russian army, commanded a division at Bautzen, Lutzen, and Culm, and was at the battle of Leipsic—as the Princess Charlotte remembered—and through the whole of the campaigns which ended in the capture of Paris in 1814.



Hence it came about he was among the notabilities who were fêted in London.

He was twenty-five years old when, in January, 1816, he received an invitation from the Prince Regent to visit England, accompanied by an explanatory letter from Lord Castlereagh, the nature of which letter can be well imagined; and his first step was to communicate with Stockmar, who was destined to occupy for many years the position of confidential adviser, both to him and to Prince Albert, the late Prince Consort. Stockmar had been a physician attached to the Saxon Ducal Regiment, and in the course of the campaign had become acquainted with Prince Leopold, who took a fancy to him.

Stockmar's character, we are told by his biographer, was a curious compound. "At one time he astonished the observer by his sanguine, bubbling, provoking, unreserved, quick fiery or humorous cheerful, even unrestrainedly gay manner, warming by his hearty, open advances where he felt himself attracted and encouraged to confidence—at other times he was all seriousness, placidity, self-possession, cool circumspection, methodical consideration, prudence, criticism, even irony and scepticism." Without doubt he was a most useful man, and exactly fitted for the duties which subsequently fell upon him.

Stockmar's clever word-sketches of character have already been alluded to. They were too truthful to have been to the taste of the personages described, and one can well understand the Duke of Cumberland, who had been the subject of Stockmar's pen, retaliating in the following malicious fashion: "I will tell you an anecdote of the origin of this worthy," the Duke, years after, is reported to have said. "He was what is called a company surgeon in a Prussian regiment, which is neither more nor less than a man employed in shaving the company, and preparing plasters and dressings in the regimental hospital; and this he was

in 1816, when Leopold was sent for to England by the late Lord Castlereagh. Leopold had the misfortune of having a malady for which Stockmar attended him, and he accompanied his patient to London; and Leopold, having used him to write his letters when not employing as a surgeon, persuaded him to stay, and he became his major-domo, and by degrees his prime councillor, and being very intriguing, he employed him upon any business, and, perhaps, as you know Leopold was always a great admirer of the fair sex, he may have employed him in that of affairs."

As Stockmar was in Prince Leopold's entire confidence, he was no doubt the first to know of the Prince's engagement; but in England the secrecy which appears to be inseparable from Court life was duly observed. Charlotte was enjoined to strict silence by order of the Regent, and though it had oozed out that one of the Princes of the Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld family had been written to, there was great uncertainty on the subject of the identity of the suitor. "I cannot give you any account as to which brother it is," writes Mrs. Campbell to Lady Harriot Frampton, "but believe he is the third; all is silence as to us. Not from any wish of *hers*, the Princess, that it should be so; but so it is, and we do not even remark upon the paragraphs in the papers. But the Princess asked if you had said anything about her, and to my reply, 'A great deal,' smiled and desired me to tell you she has not forgotten her promise."

While the negotiations were going on, Princess Charlotte was at Brighton, and we have Lady Ilchester writing that the change "has had a happy effect on Princess Charlotte's spirits, and she had an air of cheerful content that would please you. You have no idea how much her manner daily softened by witnessing the address of the Queen and Princesses, with whom she regularly went round the circle, and

paid individual attention to all the company, and she really looked very handsome, being always elegantly dressed, and every one seemed delighted to have her under her father's roof." The cartoon "Paternal Protection" represents the reconciliation and the general happiness which followed.

The family atmosphere was unusually calm, and there was an evident desire that bygones should be bygones. The alteration in the Princess's manner, however, we suspect was as much due to the near prospect of her girlish dreams of love being realised as to the change of air. The Regent was, of course, pleased that the harassing question of Charlotte's marriage was in a fair way of being settled; and that he was in one of his best moods—and he could be very charming when he liked—Lady Ilchester lets us know in the following :

"It certainly was a great gratification to the Prince to find it really gave so much pleasure to the Princess, for certainly he had been led to suspect that she did not like to come, which was a complete mistake, of which he is now convinced." Lady Ilchester goes on to give a few details of the life at the Pavilion which may be quoted. She writes: "Every one was free in the morning of all Court restraint, and only met at six o'clock punctually for dinner to the number of between thirty and forty daily, and in the evening generally about as many more were invited; a delightful band of music played till half-past eleven, when the Royal Family took their leave and the rest of the company also after partaking of sandwiches. The evenings were not in the least formal. As soon as the Queen sat down to cards everybody moved about as they pleased, and made their own backgammon, chess, or card party, but the walking up and down the gallery was the favourite lounge. All the rooms open into this beautiful gallery, which is terminated at each end by the lightest and prettiest

staircases you can imagine, made of cast iron and bamboo with glass doors beneath, which reflect the gay lanterns, etc., at each end. There are mandarins and pagodas in abundance; plenty of sofas, Japan, and China. The centre of the gallery has a skylight, but each staircase communicates to a large room into which at one end the Queen's apartments opened, at the other the Princess's and mine. The effect of this central arrangement is very good. There was in it an excellent fire, and books and newspapers, and from one set of rooms to the other there is a private communication round the skylight, so that you need not go down at one end to get up by the other to the Queen's apartments from ours."

At last the engagement was publicly announced, and at eleven o'clock on the night of February 21st, 1816, Prince Leopold landed at Dover as the accepted suitor of Princess Charlotte. He went direct to London, arriving at the Clarendon Hotel on the following day, "being," as one chronicler puts it, "only three weeks and three days in travelling from Baden to London." From London he proceeded to Brighton, accompanied by Lord Castlereagh, and on the 27th the Princess Charlotte, with the Queen and two of the Princesses, also arrived at the Pavilion. The rooms under the pinnacles of the Pavilion (not the present one, which was altered as we now see it by Nash in 1817, but the first structure built by Holland) were brilliantly decorated; lights flashed, music echoed, and all was joy and welcome. The young Princess was radiant, and, to use Lady Ilchester's words, she "seemed so happy and looked so pretty that she must please and flatter the object of her choice."

Mrs. Campbell, who appears to have been a little sore that the Princess did not take her more into confidence, writes, after Charlotte left Brighton for Cranborne Lodge, where she went when the formality

of meeting her fiancé was over: "Princess Charlotte did not enter upon the subject with me before she went, as the Prince Regent had not taken off the restriction, but she told Lady Harcourt how much it hurt her not to say anything to me before her departure. I only regret it for her sake, as I feel I might have done some good, the opportunity for which is now lost, as her head will be full of jewels, houses, dress appointments, etc., so that nothing I could say would make any impression."

For two months nothing was talked about but the approaching marriage. The nation was delighted, and preparations were at once entered upon to celebrate the occasion fittingly. The self-appointed sarcastic laureate, Dr. Walcot ("Peter Pindar"), of course invoked his muse. The subject of Royalty always inspired him, and the public were favoured with "The Royal Courtship of Charlotte and Coburg," "The Royal Nuptials," and "The Royal Marriage"; and after the wedding came "The Coburg Honeymoon" (which was so much appreciated that a continuation was called for) and "A Peep behind the Curtain."

Peter Pindar's effusions are sad stuff to read nowadays, but they lined the pockets of the shrewd and clever lampoonist, who made an excellent exchange when he relinquished physicking for poesy.

Meanwhile, there was not a cloud on the horizon, and nothing happened to mar the progress of the courtship. Generous provision was made by the House of Commons for the young couple. The Princess's dowry was fixed at £10,000 per annum by way of pin-money, and £60,000 was voted to both as an outfit, together with an annuity of £50,000 during their joint lives. In all this there was plenty of material for the caricaturist, and the cartoons we reproduce on pages 323, 333, 343 and 361, need no comment. "Princess Charlotte," wrote Lady Ilchester, "very

happy by anticipation, and flattered by the handsome manner in which her establishment is provided for by the two Houses; in short, all is *couleur de rose* now, and that makes me serious who *know* we must expect in this life so many variations." Prophetic words indeed!

On the same day, April 29th, three cavalcades set out for the wedding, which was fixed for May 2nd, to take place at Carlton House. "Queen Charlotte and her daughters," says Miss Rachel Jones, "seated in a roomy, lumbering family coach, drawn by horses heavily laden with the cumbrous harness then used, the coachman with an enormous cocked hat and six capes to his coat, were slowly borne along from Windsor to Buckingham Palace. Prince Leopold, in a carriage belonging to the Regent drawn by six bays, the servants in state liveries, preceded by outriders and followed by his suite, made a state entry into London to take up his abode at Clarence House until his marriage. The Princess Charlotte, attended by her ladies and equerry, was conveyed in an open carriage by a couple of postilions and four bay thoroughbreds to Warwick House." Crowds lined the roads, and everywhere she was greeted with hurrahs and the waving of hats and handkerchiefs. It was one long march of triumph without a break.

On the wedding day the Princess proceeded to Buckingham Palace, where she dressed, dining afterwards with her grandmother and aunts. After dinner the bride drove with the Queen in state through the Park to Carlton House.

Mrs. Rachel Jones brings the scene of the marriage ceremony, which took place at night, according to royal usage, vividly before the mind's eye. "Soon after nine," she writes, "the great crimson saloon on the first floor of Carlton House formed the background of the marriage scene. An altar covered with crimson velvet and adorned with some handsome



LEOPOLD, KING OF THE BELGIANS.

From an engraving by J. Thompson after Sir Thomas Lawrence.





church plate and two finely chased silver candlesticks, six feet high, had been arranged near one end of this magnificent room. Before it stood the Princess, a long train of silver brocade falling behind her; gossamer draperies shining with diamonds and silver embroidery flooded about her, her fair curly head encircled by a wreath of large diamonds and roses, her lustrous white arms and bosom clustered with frills of rich lace, and by her side was the dark, firm face of Leopold, with its expressive features and marked eyebrows. He appeared in English uniform, with a sword and belt studded with diamonds. The third figure, the Prince Regent, also in uniform and covered with orders, completed the group, which kneeled in front of the altar. . . . The voice of Charlotte was clear and unhesitating, and her manner was most graceful as, immediately on the conclusion of the ceremony, she raised her face to kiss her father, and then bent to take the hand of Queen Charlotte, who was seated at the head of the large array of spectators in a state chair near the altar. As the Princess turned to her husband and they walked away together, a loud roar of the Tower guns thundered out the news all over the streets of London."

The Countess of Liverpool, writing to Elizabeth Duchess of Devonshire, says: "When the ceremony was over, the Princess knelt to her father for his blessing, which he gave her and then raised and gave her a good hearty paternal hug, and that delighted me, and took her up to the Queen, who kissed her, as did her aunts."

Beneath the glitter and gorgeousness of the imposing spectacle a drama of human passion and weakness was slowly moving. Outwardly poetic justice was satisfied by the happy ending to the young Princess's girlhood of turmoil and distress; but, unsuspected by the gay throng of lords and ladies, the spirit of tragedy lurked in the background. Across the mind

of the Regent must have flitted sombre memories of his own wedding day and of the mystery and misery which followed. Both were embodied in the lovely girl who, her face glowing with happiness, her eyes lustrous with love, had risen from her knees the wife of the man of her choice. Even the note of humour, without which no drama is complete, was not wanting. This was supplied by "Good Queen Charlotte," whose prim propriety was uneasy at the idea of the newly married couple travelling alone to Oatlands, where they were to spend the honeymoon, and she suggested that Mrs. Campbell should go "bodkin" with them, considering "it was so improper that they should drive without a chaperon!" Mrs. Campbell "strenuously resisted, greatly to the Queen's disgust."

The tragedy of the past was over; that of the future was to come, and with terrible swiftmess. As though with some prescience that their bliss would be shortlived, husband and wife clung together, were unhappy when apart, and resented the intrusion of others. They lived their own quiet, secluded life at Claremont, and Charlotte even dispensed with the services of her ladies. The latter resided in the house, it is true, but they were only called into requisition as "appanages of state," to use Prince Leopold's words. The retirement of the pretty home in Surrey was broken only by flying visits to London to the opera, or to the theatre. They were fond of going to the Cobourg, afterwards better known as the "Vic." "Queen Victoria's own theaytre" was then in its palmy days, and was "one sunny glitter of gold-braided mirrors with a superb looking-glass curtain which drew up and let down in sight of the audience and reflected every form and face in that gorgeous house from the topmost seat in the galleries to the lowest bench in the pit." The two were rarely seen at state functions, and the Queen and the Regent

left them to go their own way. As for the lonely woman who was pursuing her giddy, frivolous life in Italy, if she ever wrote to the Princess or recognised her existence in any way, such communications have never been made public.

Princess Charlotte's persistent ill-luck mysteriously pursued her to the last. When she was expecting to crown her hopes and those of her husband, and the question of her medical attendant became of importance, her intimate friend Lady Ashworth urged her to have Sir William Knighton, an accoucheur of some eminence. The matter was apparently settled, and Lady Ashworth went away to Rome. When she returned she found, to her dismay, that the Princess had, upon the advice of a lady, decided to appoint Sir Richard Croft. It was too late to alter the arrangement, and Croft, a pompous, vain, and self-opinionated man, entered upon his duties. Stockmar, who was part of the household at Claremont, describes him as "a long, thin man, no longer very young, fidgety and good-natured, seems to have more experience than learning or understanding." Croft had a craze for lowering the physical strength of his patients, and this suicidal course was pursued with the Princess Charlotte. Miss Murray tells that the Princess was accustomed to have a mutton-chop and a glass of port for lunch. Croft did away with this, and substituted tea and bread and butter. She became weak and depressed, and one day a friend found her in tears. This mistaken treatment was continued for weeks. The calibre of Croft's mind can be guessed from his foolish remark in reference to his suggestion that the Princess should wear no stays : "A cow does not wear stays, why should the Princess Charlotte ?"

Her life was thrown away, for when the supreme moment was at hand, weak as she was, she was unsustained for fifty hours by any kind of nourishment

in the way of food; the obstinate and self-deluded accoucheur thinking it much better that she should not eat. The baby—a boy of unusual beauty—was born. It was dead, and Croft tried to bring back life, but in vain. Meanwhile the mother was left to herself, for the accoucheur refused to have any other doctor present. Not even any of Charlotte's ladies were with her, only the nurse.

The child was born at nine o'clock, and apparently the mother was going on fairly well, but towards midnight Croft became alarmed and went for Stockmar, telling him the Princess was dangerously ill and that the Prince must be informed. Leopold knew that the child was dead, but he did not realise the nature of the impending calamity. It was all over when he set out for her room, and on his way he sank on a chair overwhelmed. Recovering himself, he staggered on, reached the bedside, and kneeling down kissed the cold hands—"those beautiful hands which at the last while she was talking to others seemed always to be looking out for mine," were his pathetic words—and amid the stillness of death the falling curtain closed upon the tragedy.

Faint and dim is to-day the picture of the grief of the nation—the sudden crushing of its hopes—the vanishing of the prospects of a good and beneficent reign, when the Beloved Princess should become the Beloved Queen. This title was destined to be bestowed on another illustrious lady, and it was fated that the nation's yearnings for peace and happiness and prosperity, once centred in the Princess Charlotte, should be realised in Queen Victoria.

With the passing of the ill-fated Princess passes also the mystery of her shadowed life. We read of the Regent striking his two hands on his forehead, and bowed down, stricken with a silence more eloquent than words. Pity, remorse, vain regrets, one can well imagine overpowered him; but beyond these

natural emotions, all is dark. If any thought went out to his wife, he made no sign. The task of sending the news to the Princess Caroline fell upon the bereaved husband, and of the effect we know but little. It is said she fainted, and it is more than likely. Her only reference to the calamity which appears to be extant is contained in a letter written to Lady Charlotte Campbell soon after she received the sad tidings. "I have not only to lament an ever-beloved child," she writes, "but one warmly attached friend, and the only one I have had in England! But she is only gone before. I have not her *losset*, and I now trust we shall soon meet in a much better world than the present one."

It is difficult to avoid feeling that there is something constrained in these words—that the use of "child" rather than "daughter" sounds cold. But let it rest. Time has softened the darker details of the sad story, and the one thing that now stands out in the memory is that year of unalloyed happiness when the young wife was permitted to taste the joy of living. Those months of love and tranquillity made amends for all the misery and tumult that had gone before. Princess Charlotte never had her chance, but she did not live in vain. Her strong and lovable character, her courage under distress of mind difficult to parallel, and the fact that her whole life, though in itself comparatively uneventful, was the centre and the cause of a whirlpool of passion and intrigue, make her history singularly romantic. Even at this distance one is conscious of its fascination, and at the time when the nation's eyes were fixed upon the moving drama it must have been doubly so. The heart of the people went out to her in affection and sympathy, and with truth and justice may she indeed be called the Beloved Princess. Years after sinister rumours were afloat as to the cause of the poor Princess's death. These rumours

found a place in that notorious book, "The Secret History of the Court of England," the product, it is said, of the unscrupulous Mrs. Olive Serres and may be allowed to rest with the other slanders therein recorded. Southey expressed the universal grief in his "Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales," with the following stanzas from which we may fittingly conclude :

In its summer pride array'd,  
 Low our Tree of Hope is laid !  
 Low it lies :—in evil hour,  
 Visiting the bridal bower,  
 Death hath levell'd root and flower.  
 Windsor, in thy sacred shade  
 (This the end of pomp and power !)  
 Have the rites of death been paid ;  
 Windsor, in thy sacred shade  
 Is the Flower of Brunswick laid !

Ye whose relics rest around,  
 Tenants of this funeral ground !  
 Know ye, Spirits, who is come,  
 By immitigable doom  
 Summon'd to the untimely tomb ?  
 Late with youth and splendour crowned,  
 Late in beauty's vernal bloom,  
 Late with love and joyaunce blest ;  
 Never more lamented guest  
 Was in Windsor laid to rest.

. . . . .

Ye whose relics rest around,  
 Tenants of this funeral ground ;  
 Even in your immortal spheres,  
 What fresh yearnings will ye feel,  
 When this earthly guest appears !  
 Us she leaves in grief and tears ;  
 But to you will she reveal  
 Tidings of old England's weal ;  
 Of a righteous war pursued  
 Long, through evil and through good,  
 With unshaken fortitude ;  
 Of peace in battle twice achieved ;

Of her fiercest foe subdued,  
And Europe from the yoke reliev'd,  
Upon that Brabantine plain!  
Such the proud, the virtuous story,  
Such the great, the endless glory  
Of her father's splendid reign!  
He who wore the sable mail,  
Might, at this heroic tale,  
Wish himself on earth again.

One, who reverently, for thee,  
Raised the strain of bridal verse,  
Flower of Brunswick! mournfully  
Lays a garland on thy herse.

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